

sex talk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

wildfact

79% of UA students did not use tobacco in the past 30 days. (2010 Health & Wellness Survey, N=2,931)

Q What are some intimate activities for gay men outside of anal sex?

A. Intercourse, whether through vaginal or anal penetration, is just one form of sexual intimacy. The options, as you suggest, need not be limited to these alone. Whether gay, straight, lesbian, or bisexual, many couples enjoy kissing, massage, foreplay, fantasy, frottage (the French word for body rubbing), mutual masturbation, or talking as other ways to enjoy one another and arouse the senses. While lower risk than anal sex, oral stimulation can be another satisfying option, but keep in mind that “going down” can still lead to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) like herpes, gonorrhea, and chlamydia.

An even better answer to your question can be found by going directly to the source: why not use this as a chance to talk with your partner about turn-ons, turn-offs, and boundaries up front? Communication can increase your comfort level and help avoid awkward (and unwanted) moments in bed down the road.

Exploring intimate activities other than anal sex may also have another benefit – reducing risk for both you and your partner.

Because the lining of the anus is a thin membrane, it can easily tear and bleed, which is one reason anal sex is considered high-risk for transmitting HIV, hepatitis, and other STDs. Furthermore, since the anus is designed to expel waste from the body, small amounts of fecal matter and bacteria there may cause infection if they come in contact with the mouth or urethra, though a soapy shower or anal douching prior to sex can help reduce these risks.

Curious about what other students are doing? Of the students who identified as gay men in the 2010 Health & Wellness Survey, slightly more reported ever having oral sex (84%) compared to anal sex (79%). In the past school year, 71% of gay men said they had intercourse, and 29% had not.

The Campus Health Service (CHS) offers condoms and STD testing – two other ways to lower your risk and boost your peace of mind. Call 621-9202 to schedule an appointment or stop by the CHS Pharmacy. Walk-in appointments are also welcome.



Have a question? Send it to sextalk@email.arizona.edu

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