

sex talk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

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Quick and easy flu shot clinic Thurs. Dec 9th,
12-3pm (Main library entrance doors) \$15

Q Is masturbation unhealthy?

A. Fantastic question! The short answer is no, with some rare exceptions. While it was once regarded as taboo, the “five digit disco” is now considered to be a normal, healthy sexual activity that is fulfilling, acceptable, and safe. Masturbation is defined as self-stimulation of the genitals to achieve pleasure or orgasm. It can be performed by touching, stroking, or massaging the penis or clitoris until an orgasm is achieved.

According to WebMD, in a national study, 95% of males and 89% of females reported that they have masturbated. Research has shown that “self-love” can have a number of healthy benefits. Masturbation...

- relieves stress and tension.
- is a natural sleep sedative.
- builds muscle tone in the genital region.
- releases endorphins which boost your mood.
- is safe! There's no risk of sexually transmitted diseases.

Masturbation becomes an issue when it starts to interfere with academics, work, social life, physical health, or emotional well-being. Some cultures or religious practices place a stigma on masturbation that one should feel guilty or

shameful after pleasuring themselves. If masturbation negatively impacts your life or you use it as an escape to avoid issues such as loneliness, anger, resentment, etc., then it may be helpful to discuss and reevaluate your behavior with a counselor, health care provider, or a trusted friend.

We are often asked if a person can pleasure oneself “too much.” There is no definitive answer, but as long as masturbation does not interfere with your daily activities, it can be done once, or even multiple times per day. Masturbation can serve as a means of empowerment by helping you feel better about your body, genitals, and sexual response. In addition, masturbation increases your sexual awareness, giving you the opportunity to discover what turns you on, boosting your sexual confidence.

Again, if masturbating produces negative health outcomes for you, seek advice at the Counseling and Psychological Services office, located on the third floor of Campus Health. Call 621-3334 for more info.

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

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