

sex talk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

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Campus Health is open all summer! Call 520-621-9202 for an appointment with a caring medical provider.

Q How often should I get tested for STDs?

A. As a student, it is a good idea to be in touch with all facets of your health. Sexual health is no different. In addition to using safer sex practices (e.g. getting consent, using condoms and birth control), getting screened for sexually transmitted diseases, or STDs, on a regular basis is a smart decision. But how often is enough without going overboard?

The short answer: it depends on each individual and their behavior. A person who hasn't had any sexual partners or engaged in risky behavior since their last test can be confident that their status hasn't changed. Conversely, a person who has had multiple sex partners has a higher risk of acquiring an STD. Other risk factors include improper condom use, needle sharing, or exchange of body fluids between partners who don't know their status.

The Pima County Health Department recommends the following guidelines for testing: If you have multiple partners, aim for a checkup once every 3 months. If you are entering into a long-term monogamous relationship, get tested with your partner at least 3 months after going out. Don't hesitate to consult a medical

professional if you notice fluid discharge, itching, burning, sores, bumps, blisters, unusual odors, or any other changes in your body. Keep in mind that many STDs do not show any symptoms.

If you are looking for a convenient location to get tested, Campus Health offers confidential and affordable testing for students taking at least 1 credit. After a \$20 co-pay, available tests include chlamydia (\$31), gonorrhea (\$31), herpes (\$44), HIV (\$23), syphilis (\$21). **All visits and tests are confidential** and can be billed to your Bursar's account! If you have the CampusCare supplement, the cost of the lab work is covered under the co-pay. Other insurance plans may also cover these costs. For details, call our billing office at 621-6487.

No one knows your body better than you. Be aware of any changes to stay happy and healthy.

Guest columnist: Zac Tolley, Public Health Senior



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