

sex talk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

wildfact

Stop by Free Condom Friday every Friday from 12-2pm at the Campus Health Service!

Q If a guy has type 1 herpes on his mouth and goes down on a girl, can she contract herpes on her vagina?

A. Yes. Anytime a herpes sore comes in contact with skin, the virus can be transmitted. Even if sores are *not* visible on someone who has the herpes virus, there is still a risk of transmission to the other partner(s). There are two types of herpes: HSV-1 and HSV-2. As many as 90% of U.S. adults carry oral herpes (HSV-1), commonly known as cold sores. Why is this percentage so high? A simple kiss on the mouth from an aunt, uncle, or parent when you were younger could have transmitted the virus. HSV-2 is the most common cause for genital herpes. About 16% of the U.S. population has genital herpes.

Symptoms of both HSV-1 and HSV-2 are very similar. When there is an outbreak, one or more blisters may appear on the anus, mouth, or genitals. When the blister(s) start to scab, they leave sores that can be very tender. It can take from 2-4 weeks from the time of initial outbreak

for them to heal. Because herpes is a virus, it stays in your system for life, but the outbreaks will usually lessen over time. Prescription medications are available that can treat and help control outbreaks.

Remember, just because you don't see sores present, there is still the risk of transmitting herpes. Lower your risk by knowing you and your partner's herpes status and by using barrier methods, such as condoms or latex dams. You can buy 100 condoms for only \$14.99 and flavored latex dams for \$1 each at the Campus Health Pharmacy. Testing is available for HSV and other sexually transmitted infections at the Campus Health Service laboratory. To make an appointment call (520) 626-9202.



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

SexTalk is written by Lee Ann Hamilton, M.A., CHES, David Salafsky, MPH, and Carrie Hardesty, BS, CHES, health educators at The UA Campus Health Service.