

sex talk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

wildfact

Goosebumps are an evolutionary hold over from our hairier hominid ancestors. The defense mechanism made their fur stand on end, resulting in a larger, more intimidating look.

Q What are those bumps around my penis shaft? I've never had sex.

A. Fear not! Sometimes a bump is just a bump – particularly if you're at low risk for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Bumps on the lower part of your penis shaft or around the scrotum are likely sebaceous glands and the hair follicles they are associated with. Since these bumps are quite small and easy to overlook, it's only natural to wonder if they have always been there once you happen to notice them. Bottom line: they are 100% normal and everyone has them.

Irritation or injury is another very common issue that can affect the skin around the penis. Most minor abrasions or skin inflammations will go away on their own or with the help of a lubricant such as Vaseline to help minimize the irritation. Some men may also have small, benign (non-cancerous) growths around the head of the penis, called pearly penile papules. These are also perfectly normal and pose no problems for the men who have them.

If you become sexually active (and even if

you don't), it's a good idea to keep looking over "the equipment" to know what's normal for you. That way, you'll be more likely to notice any potential changes soon after they show up. Common signs and symptoms of STDs include pain, itching, sores, redness, smelly or unusual discharge, rash, lesions, painful urination, unusual bleeding, and, yes, bumps. If you have any of these, get checked out by a health care provider as soon as possible.

Mark your calendars, Wildcats. The GYT (Get Yourself Tested) Resource Fair is coming to the UA Mall on Wednesday, 4/17 from 10am-2pm. This is a great opportunity to pick up free condoms and have your STD questions answered by health professionals. After all, one in two people who are sexually active will get an STD by age 25. Do you know your status? If not, stop by the GYT Resource Fair for a FREE chlamydia and gonorrhea screening.



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.