

# sex talk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

## wildfact

ASU does NOT have it's very own sexually transmitted infection. Wildcats get the same STIs that Sun Devils do.

## Q Does “Friends with Benefits” work?

A. Friends With Benefits (FWB) means different things to different people. To most UA students, an FWB is someone you know (and perhaps trust) to have sex with. No strings attached. There is no commitment and no title like “lover” or “partner.” The FWB may be more of an acquaintance than someone in your circle of friends. And, your FWB may be a secret relationship that your closest friends don't even know about.

The advantages of having an FWB are primarily sexual. You have someone to “hook up” with, but without all the time, obligation, energy, and stress that may accompany a relationship. When you have an FWB, you are free to experiment and enjoy the pleasure without most of the pain; unless one of you develops feelings and emotions – which often happens.

Feelings seem to be the most likely disadvantage that may result from an FWB arrangement. One person may want a more emotionally intimate relationship. Another person may develop a liking, even love, for their sex buddy. If the feelings aren't reciprocated, someone can end up feeling used. Because FWBs are free to

sleep with other people, it's not uncommon for feelings of jealousy to arise.

The disadvantages also include greater exposure to sexual risks. Some people feel safer with a FWB because they think they “know” them better than a stranger they just met at a party. Having a sex buddy doesn't guarantee safer sex. If your FWB has several other sex buddies (the ones they keep secret from you in order to spare all those potential feelings), you can expect more exposure to sexually transmitted infections such as herpes, chlamydia, genital warts, and more.

Having sex with an FWB only works well as long as both people play by the same accepted ground rules: the “relationship” is about sex and convenience without commitment or emotional intimacy. For many, these terms may feel like an unacceptable substitute for companionship. No matter what kind of relationship you are in, the best way to avoid hurt feelings and complicated emotions is to be clear about your expectations from the start.



Have a question? Send it to [sextalk@email.arizona.edu](mailto: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.