

sex talk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

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Stress reduction is one of the leading reasons Americans, particularly men, say they have sex. *Source: WebMD*

Q My boyfriend wants to try anal but I'm afraid. What can I do to prepare?

A. Healthy relationships involve negotiation. It's important to ask yourself if you are comfortable trying something that makes you afraid. Communicating with your partner about your (dis)comfort level can help reduce feelings of anxiety.

If you choose to engage in anal sex, here are a few tips:

Use a lot of lube and move at a slow pace to decrease both friction and discomfort for you. Since the anus is not very elastic, there are lubricants made especially for anal sex. These anal lubes can numb or desensitize the rectum, and tend to be thicker than other lubricants. Experiment with different types and brands to determine which works best for you.

Take a soapy shower together before sex to help both of you feel more clean and comfortable.

After anal sex, use a fresh condom if you follow up with oral or vaginal sex. The anus contains fecal matter and bacteria, which are harmless in the anus, but can

cause infections in the urethral opening, vagina, or mouth. For example, urinary tract infections (UTIs) can develop when fecal matter enters the urethra.

Anal sex, in and of itself, does not cause disease, but is considered high risk for transmitting HIV and Hepatitis B if either partner is infected. The lining of the anus is thin, and with the friction from intercourse it may tear and bleed, increasing risk of disease transmission. Use a condom every time, from start to finish, to decrease your risk of infection.

Condoms and lubricant are available for purchase at local stores and pharmacies. The UA Campus Health Service Pharmacy carries several brands of both. You can even buy 100 condoms for \$14.99. Free condoms are available at Free Condom Friday in Health Promotion and Preventive Services every Friday from 12-2pm.

*Guest Columnist:
Stephanie R. Smith,
Public Health Senior*



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.