

sex talk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

wildfact

UA is ranked #3 in the latest Trojan Sexual Health Report Card for Sexual Health Resources.

Q Is it o.k. to skip the last week of pills in a birth control pill pack?

A. Yes. Only the first 21 days of pills in a pack work to prevent pregnancy. If you use a 28-day pack, the last seven pills are optional and are included just to keep you “in the habit” of taking a pill each day.

Most brands of pills are formulated so that the last seven pills don't contain active

ingredients, although they may include a low dose of iron. Some newer formulations have a bit of estrogen in the last few pills, to reduce side effects and to help with the adjustment to the next full pack. Key point: the last seven days of pills do not affect pregnancy prevention—you can take them or trash them.

Q What's the best way to get rid of hickies?

A. Time. Hope. Patience.

A hickey is a bruise caused by someone sucking or nibbling on the skin. Skin discoloration occurs as a result of broken blood vessels and blood leaking into the tissues just below the skin. Bruises can appear if skin is injured by an overzealous romantic partner. Women are more prone to bruising than men. During the healing phase, which may take 2 weeks or more, hickies create a rainbow of colors, including blue, purple, red, and greenish-yellow. Here are a few tips that will help any bruise to the skin:

Protect the area from further “trauma.”

Apply ice or cold packs immediately to reduce

pain and swelling. Repeat the cold treatment several times a day for 10 to 20 minutes each session.

For the first 48 hours after getting the hickey, avoid activities that may increase swelling, such as hot showers, hot tubs, hot packs, or alcoholic beverages.

Gently massage the hickey to increase blood flow and relieve pain. Don't rub the area if it hurts too much.

Of course, you can use makeup to help disguise the hickey and tone down the colors until your body heals itself.



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

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