

sextalk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

factoid Massage therapy and ~~acupuncture~~ are available at Campus Health. Call 621-9202 for an appointment.

Q. Can you get herpes from a cold sore? What is the difference between a cold sore and a canker sore?

A. Yes, you can get herpes from a cold sore. Cold sores are caused by the Herpes Simplex Virus type 1 (HSV-1) and are highly contagious. Cold sores generally appear as clusters of small red blisters on the lip or outer edge of the mouth. These blisters sometime pop and leak clear fluid before scabbing over. When oral herpes lesions and/or their contents come into direct contact with the genital area through oral-genital sex, genital herpes may develop.

On the other hand, canker sores are small ulcers that occur inside the mouth and can cause discomfort with eating and talking. These are not considered to be contagious. Canker sores are often caused by stress or tissue injury. Examples of tissue injury may include biting the inside of your lip, brushing your gums too vigorously or eating food which may irritate the inside of your mouth.

If you are concerned or think you have a cold sore, you should refrain from sexual activity or limit the skin-to-skin contact with your partner. Campus Health offers herpes testing for \$26-\$75 depending on what type of test you obtain. For those who test positive for herpes, antiviral drugs are available to lessen the severity of outbreaks or suppress recurring outbreaks. There is also a herpes support group in the community. To join, go to: <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/tucsonhfriends/>

Whether or not you have herpes, it is always best to use condoms while engaging in sexual activity.

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

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