

# sextalk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

**factoid**

Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are among the most common health complaints among women of reproductive age.

## Q. Is it true that you should pee every time after sexual intercourse?

A. While urinating after intercourse will not reduce your risk of contracting a sexually transmitted infection (STI), let alone becoming/getting your partner pregnant, it can lessen the chance of a urinary tract infection, also known as a UTI. Urinating helps flush out the urinary tract and keeps bacteria from attaching to its inner walls, and can provide some measure of prevention against contamination and infection in this normally sterile environment.

Although infections of this kind can occur in any part of the urinary system, including the kidneys and ureters (thin tubes that transport urine to the bladder), the bladder and urethra tend to be the most susceptible. Contrary to popular belief, UTIs affect both sexes, though women are at greater risk. The reason? Women have a shorter urethra, which makes it easier for UTI-causing bacteria to reach the bladder. Other risk factors for UTIs include being sexually active, women who use a diaphragm or spermicide for birth control, aging, kidney stones, diabetes or other chronic illnesses.

The signs and symptoms of UTIs can appear suddenly. Here are a few things to look for:

- A strong, persistent urge to urinate
- A burning sensation when urinating
- Strong-smelling urine
- Passing frequent, small amounts of urine
- Cloudy or bloody urine

A short course of antibiotics is the standard treatment for UTIs, but as with most health issues, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Here are a few everyday ways to help steer clear of UTIs before they show up:

- Drink plenty of water
- Empty your bladder after intercourse
- Try cranberry juice, which may help prevent, but not treat UTIs
- Avoid douches, sprays, or any scented feminine products
- Wipe from front to back when using the bathroom

Have a health concern that needs to be checked out? Call 621-9202 to schedule an appointment at Campus Health, or stop by our office in the Highland Commons Building near 6th St. and Highland Ave. More information is available at [health.arizona.edu](http://health.arizona.edu).



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

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