

Difficult Questions

Pregnancy

Q: Can you get pregnant/get someone else pregnant by oral sex?

A: **No. In order for someone to become pregnant, a sperm cell must come into contact with an egg cell. This will not occur through oral sex. However, even though a pregnancy cannot occur through oral sex, it still puts a person at risk for contracting STIs/HIV.**

Q: Can you get pregnant by anal sex?

A: **The physical act of the insertion of a penis into someone's rectum will not, in itself, result in a pregnancy. However, if someone has a vagina, the vagina and the rectum are really close to each other. After anal sex, sperm will come back out of the rectum and can come into contact with the vagina. Anytime sperm comes into contact with the vagina, even if it is just the opening, there is a risk for pregnancy. A person is also still at risk for contracting STIs/HIV from anal sex.**

Q: Can guys get pregnant?

A: **No, a biological male cannot get pregnant.**

Q: Can an animal get a woman pregnant?

A: **No. It is not safe or legal to have sex with animals.**

Q: Can a woman get pregnant while she is on her period?

A: **Yes, not all vaginal bleeding is the result of a menstrual period. Sometimes, there will be a small amount of vaginal bleeding at the time of ovulation – the time when they are most fertile. Also, sometimes ovulation can occur before the bleeding from a period has stopped or within a few days after the period is over. Sperm can live for up to 5 days in the body waiting for an egg and can fertilize an egg for several days after ejaculation. (Kidshealth.org)**

Q: Can a girl get pregnant if she hasn't had her first period?

A: Yes. Getting pregnant has to do with ovulation. Because someone can ovulate before having their first period, it is possible to become pregnant before beginning to menstruate. Any time someone has vaginal sex, it can result in a pregnancy. (kidshealth.org)

Q: If a guy ejaculates onto his hand and then touches a girl's vagina, can she still get pregnant?

A: Yes, anytime semen comes in contact with the vagina, even if it is just the opening, there is a risk for pregnancy. This can also spread STIs/HIV.

Q: How do twins happen?

A: Fraternal twins happen when two different sperm fertilize two different eggs. Fraternal twins are no more closely related than any other siblings. Identical twins happen when one sperm fertilizes one egg, and it splits into two embryos. This is why they are called identical twins: they are genetically identical.

Q: When a woman has a miscarriage, where does the baby go?

A: It depends on how far along they are in the pregnancy. Typically, the embryo or fetus is expelled from the uterus and exits the vagina. Sometimes, a doctor might have to perform a procedure to make sure all of the tissue is removed safely; otherwise, it could cause an infection. (If students ask further questions, tell them you are not a healthcare provider and can't answer that.) <https://www.whattoexpect.com/pregnancy/miscarriage/>

Q: Why are some people unable to get someone pregnant/get pregnant?

A: There is a wide variety of reasons ranging from hormonal disorders, injuries, poor health, to age, etc.

Q: Can you have sex while pregnant?

A: **Yes, unless a doctor tells you not to. Don't forget that a pregnant person is still at risk for contracting STIs/HIV. The fetus is protected by the amniotic fluid in the womb, by the abdomen, and by the mucus plug which seals the cervix and helps guard against infections. (americanpregnancy.org)**

Q: If teens have a baby, can they breastfeed?

A: **Yes, if they choose to and are producing enough milk.**

Q: What causes a baby to be born with a mental or physical disability?

A: **There are a variety of things that can cause physical or mental disabilities, such as genetic disorders, drug use by the mother, injuries, age, etc. (If students ask further questions, tell them you are not a healthcare provider and can't answer that).**

[Condoms/Birth Control](#)

Q: Why do condoms break?

A: **Improper use (ex: using two condoms at once) creates friction which can cause condoms to break. Condoms can also be expired, over heated, fit incorrectly, not enough lubrication, etc.**

Q: Does birth control always work?

A: **The simple answer is no. Hormonal birth control must be used properly, as prescribed by a doctor, take it every day at the same time (the pill), in order for it to be effective. Birth control offers no protection against STIs/HIV. Remember, abstinence is the only 100% effective way to prevent pregnancy and STIs, including HIV. [Info on Contraception](#)**

Q: Can you wear two or more condoms?

A: **No, friction between them will cause them to tear.**

STIs

Q: How do STIs start?

A: We are not sure how STIs started, just like we don't know where the flu started. We do know they are mutated viruses and bacteria just like the flu or the common cold. Some STIs are bacterial: Chlamydia, syphilis, and gonorrhea and some are viral: HIV, HPV, and herpes. Bacterial STIs can be cured with antibiotics and viral STIs cannot be cured- medications can reduce breakouts/symptoms but there is currently no cure for viral STIs.

Q: If you don't have symptoms of STIs, then what's the big deal?

A: Even if you do not experience physical symptoms, leaving STIs untreated can lead to many serious problems, such as infertility, future health issues with your heart, brain, or liver cancer, and even death. STIs can do serious damage even if you do not have physical signs/symptoms. This is why it's important to get tested, especially after unprotected sex.

Q: If some STIs are transmitted through just skin to skin contact, can I get them on my hand or can they be transmitted through handshakes?

A: Most STIs are spread from one individual to another during anal, oral, or vaginal sex. Genital herpes, syphilis, and human papillomavirus (HPV) are most often spread through genital skin-to-skin contact. Anytime a person engages in a sexual activity where there is skin to skin contact and/or body fluids (vaginal secretions, semen, blood) present, they are at risk for contracting an STI.

Q: Can people still get an STI if they are in a gay/lesbian relationship?

A: Yes, anytime a person engages in sexual activity where there is skin to skin contact and/or body fluids (vaginal secretions, semen, blood) present, they are at risk for contracting an STI.

Q: Can you get an STI without getting your period?

A: Beginning your menstrual cycle has nothing to do with the ability to contract STIs/HIV. Anytime a person engages in a sexual activity where there is skin to skin contact and/or body fluids (vaginal secretions, semen, blood) present, they are at risk for contracting an STI.

Q: Can animals give humans STIs?

A: While many animals carry their own forms of [STIs](#) (ex: Koalas have their own strain of Chlamydia!), these STIs are different from human STIs and cannot be transmitted to people. It is not, however, safe or legal to have sex with animals.

Q: What is Chlamydia?

A: Chlamydia is a common bacterial STI that can cause discharge from the penis or vagina.

Q: What is the clap? Why is gonorrhea called the clap?

A: The clap is a slang term for gonorrhea. Gonorrhea is called [the clap](#) because, before the invention of antibiotics, men who contracted gonorrhea would get a buildup of the infection in their penises. A doctor would take a book or a mallet and “clap” it down onto the penis to break up the infection.

Q: Is “crabs” an STD?

A: Crabs, also known as Pubic Lice, are a sexually transmitted parasite. Pubic lice are not technically a disease, but are often grouped with STIs due to the fact they can be sexually transmitted. Pubic lice can be present even without pubic hair.

Q: Are cold sores herpes? Does that mean a person with cold sores has the herpes virus?

A: It is important to understand that there are two strains of herpes: Herpes Simplex 1 (HSV-1) and Herpes Simplex 2 (HSV-2). HSV-1 is better known as the common cold sore. In most cases, HSV-1 is not a sexually transmitted infection; it is picked up by most people in their childhood through close contact with someone who has the virus. HSV-2 is better known as genital herpes and is most commonly contracted through sexual contact. However, a person can get HSV-1 on the genitals or HSV-2 on their mouth. Even if a person does not have sores, the herpes virus remains in their body and can be transmitted to others. There is no cure for herpes, though there are medications which can make the symptoms more manageable.

Q: What is “trich”?

A: Trichomoniasis, or “trich”, is a sexually transmitted infection caused by the parasite *Trichomoniasis vaginalis*. While trich is most commonly contracted through vaginal intercourse, the parasite can also be picked up from shared towels, swimsuits, underwear, etc. People with trich may experience irritation or itching inside the penis, redness, itching, burning, or soreness of the vaginal region, burning during urination, or abnormal discharge. Trich can be treated with antibiotics.

Q: What is syphilis?

A: Syphilis is a bacterial STD that is transmitted through vaginal, anal, and oral sex. Syphilis occurs in 3 stages. Stage 1 (primary) stage syphilis can cause a sore or chancre on the site of the infection. Stage 2 (secondary) stage syphilis can cause a skin rash on one or more parts of the body and is not limited to the infection site. Stage 3 (latent) stage syphilis can result in brain damage, blindness, heart disease, liver disease, paralysis, dementia, and even death (this can occur 10-20 years after the initial infection). Syphilis can be treated with antibiotics.

Q: What is HPV? Should I get the shot?

A: HPV, or the Human Papilloma Virus, is a viral infection with over 40 different strains. HPV is responsible for a variety of minor illnesses, including common and planter’s warts. However, there are multiple strains of HPV that can be transmitted through vaginal, anal, and oral sex. There does not have to be any exposure to body fluids for a person to contract HPV. HPV is the most common STD, and for most people who contract HPV, the virus will clear up on its own. However, some strains of HPV can cause cancer (cervical, throat, penile, anal) or genital warts. As for the shot, the CDC recommends that people of all genders receive the HPV vaccine. It has been approved by the FDA for anyone ages 9-26. This is a conversation you and your parents should have with your doctor.

<https://www.cdc.gov/hpv/parents/vaccine.html>

Q: What is hepatitis? Is it a sexually transmitted infection?

A: Hepatitis is a series of viral infections that cause inflammation of the liver. Hepatitis A, B, and C are the most common strains. Hepatitis can be transmitted through vaginal, anal, and

oral sex, but this is not its primary method of transmission.

<https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/abc/index.htm>

Q: What is a blue waffle/red pancake/fried rice disease?

A: Blue waffle, red pancake, and fried rice disease are fake STIs. You may see pictures that say these are “real” STIs, but the pictures are either photo shopped or are pictures of extreme versions of other STIs. If you have any questions about whether or not an STI is “real,” seek that information from a reputable, medical website such as the Center for Disease Control (CDC). If it’s not listed on the CDC’s website, then it’s not a real STI.

HIV/AIDS

Q: Where did HIV come from?

A: There are a lot of theories about the origins of HIV, but the most commonly accepted one is that a hunter in Africa killed a primate infected with SIV, the simian form of HIV. Through either getting the animal’s blood into an open wound or through consuming raw meat/blood, the virus entered the human’s body and mutated into HIV.

<https://www.theaidsinstitute.org/education/aids-101/where-did-hiv-come-0>

Q: How can you tell if you have HIV/AIDS?

A: The only way to know is to get tested. Some people who contract HIV may experience flu-like symptoms such as fever, headache, fatigue, swollen glands. However, many people do not experience any symptoms at all. It is recommended that individuals engaging in unprotected sexual activity or drug use get tested every 3-6 months, even if they have no symptoms. It can take 3-6 months after exposure for a positive test result to show up.

Q: Can you get HIV from a partner if you already have HIV/AIDS?

A: There are multiple strains of HIV. This means that if two people have HIV/AIDS and are engaging in unprotected sexual activity or sharing needles, then they run the risk being infected with a second strain. Someone may become sicker once the second strain of the virus enters the system. This happens because the new strain may be more difficult for the

immune system to control, or because the new strain is resistant to the HIV medications the person is taking. <https://www.hiv.va.gov/patient/faqs/risk-of-sex-with-positive-person.asp>

Q: Can you get rid of HIV/AIDS?

A: No. There is no cure for HIV/AIDS, though there are medications which make the symptoms more manageable. Someone can also maintain an undetectable viral load by taking medications, making it less likely to transmit to others.

<https://www.niaid.nih.gov/diseases-conditions/treatment-prevention>

Q: But I heard Magic Johnson was cured of HIV?

A: In the case of Magic Johnson, Johnson has an “undetectable viral load”. A person’s viral load tells how many particles of HIV are present in their blood. The goal of HIV treatment is to reduce a person’s viral load so much that HIV doesn’t appear on a simple blood test and cannot transmit the virus to others. However, this does not mean the person is cured of HIV.

Q: But what about that guy that was cured of HIV?

A: The person you are referring to is Timothy Brown, also known as “[The Berlin Patient](#)”. Brown had HIV and then got leukemia. In order to treat the leukemia, he was given a bone marrow transplant in 2007. The bone marrow he received had a genetic mutation that makes immune cells resistant to HIV. As of 2020, he shows no detectable amount of HIV anywhere in his body, making him the first person to be “effectively cured” of HIV. In 2017, there was [another patient](#) in London who was also effectively cured also by the mutation gene in bone marrow transplant. However, doctors are still unsure if this is a permanent cure.

Q: If a mother has HIV/AIDS, will their baby have it for sure?

A: In the United States, with proper medical treatment, we can prevent 98% of mother to child transmissions.

[Homosexuality](#)

Q: What is homosexuality/what does it mean to be gay/is it wrong?

A: Homosexuality, or being gay, is being sexually attracted to someone of the same gender. Whether or not it is “right or wrong” depends on a person’s beliefs and values and is not something that we will be discussing in class. However, no matter what sexuality or gender someone identifies with, everyone needs to know the tools for preventing STIs/HIV. Anytime there are body fluids present (ex: semen, vaginal fluids, blood), a person is at risk for contracting STIs/HIV.

Q: Why are people gay?

A: Just as some people identify as straight/heterosexual and are attracted to the opposite sex, some people are gay/homosexual and are attracted to the same sex. There are many [sexual orientations](#) under the LGBTQ+ umbrella that someone may identify with based on their attractions.

Anatomy/Definitions

Q: What is an orgasm?

A: It is a sexual release that results in both physical and psychological responses.

Q: What are blue balls?

A: Sometimes, when a person with penis gets aroused but are unable to ejaculate, they feel a heaviness in their testicles. “Blue balls” is a slang term used to describe this discomfort. This feeling is not permanent nor will it do any kind of damage. And remember: never let someone use “blue balls” as an excuse to pressure you into sex.

Q: What is the average penis size?

A: The average adult penis size is between 5 and 6 inches erect. During puberty, genitals are still developing so the penis can be a variety of sizes. Every penis is normal, so you shouldn’t worry much about what size you are.

Q: What is a clit?

A: Clit is a slang term for the clitoris. It is a bundle of nerve endings above the vaginal opening. It is the primary pleasure source of the vulva.

Q: What is the g-spot?

A: It is an area on the inside of a vagina that produces pleasure.

Q: What does it mean to be horny?

A: To be aroused or “turned on.”

Q: What does it mean to “pop a cherry”?

A: This is a slang term for the first time someone with a vagina has vaginal intercourse. “Popping a cherry” refers to the act of breaking the hymen. The hymen is a thin piece of tissue that partially covers the entrance of the vagina while the body is still developing. It is believed that this is torn or broken the first time someone with a vagina has sex. However, the hymen typically does not block the opening of the vagina, and, while it can be torn or stretched during first intercourse, it may have already torn through exercising, riding a bike, gymnastics, etc. Also, the hymen thins out as the body grows and matures.

Q: Why do women get wet/what does it mean when a girl gets wet?

A: When a vagina gets aroused, there is an increased production of vaginal fluids.

Q: Does sex hurt/does it hurt the first time?

A: Everyone’s body is different so it’s difficult to say how it will feel for each person. However, sex should not be a painful experience.

Vaginal/Anal/Oral Sex

Q: What is vaginal sex?

A: Vaginal sex is the insertion of a penis into a vagina.

Q: What is anal sex? Can you get STIs from it?

A: Anal sex is the insertion of a penis into another person's rectum/anus (butt). A person engaging in anal sex is at risk for STIs/HIV, especially if it's unprotected sex.

Q: What is oral sex? Can you get STIs from it?

A: Oral sex is when someone places their mouth on someone else's genitals (penis, vagina or anus). A person engaging in oral sex is at risk for STIs/HIV, especially without a condom or dental dam (latex barrier).

Q: Is Oral sex really sex?

A: "Oral" is an adjective for the noun "sex". While a person cannot get pregnant from oral sex, they are still at risk for contracting STIs/HIV.

Q: Is eating pussy oral sex?

A: Yes, that is the slang term for oral sex performed on a vulva/vagina.

Q: What is a blow job?

A: A slang term for oral sex performed on a penis.

Q: What is 69?

A: Simultaneous oral sex. It does count as sex, and a person is still at risk for contracting for STIs/HIV, especially if it's unprotected.

Q: Where does sperm go during oral sex? During anal sex?

A: If you're not using a condom during oral sex on a penis, if sperm is swallowed, it will go into the stomach. During anal sex, sperm goes in a person's rectum if you're not wearing a condom. This sperm/semen will eventually come out. If the semen comes into contact with a vagina there is a risk for pregnancy. Both anal and oral sex places a person at risk for contracting STIs/HIV, to lower your risk, use a condom (or dental dam on the vulva or anus).

Masturbation/Mutual Masturbation

Q: What is masturbation/jacking off? Is it ok? Can it hurt you?

A: Masturbation is when someone touches their own genitals for the sake of sexual pleasure. Masturbation will not cause any ill health effects (such as growing hair on your palms or going blind). Whether or not it is "right or wrong" is a matter of personal belief.

Q: What is fingering? Can you get STIs from fingering a girl?

A: Fingering is when another person touches a vulva/vagina for the sake of sexual pleasure. It's possible to contract an STI that can be passed skin to skin (HPV, herpes, syphilis). Otherwise, the vaginal fluids would have to go into your body to be at risk (HIV, chlamydia, gonorrhea).

Q: Is a hand job sex?

A: A hand job (masturbating someone's penis) can be considered a sexual behavior. There is a presence of body fluids (semen) which can cause the spread of skin-to-skin contact STIs.

Periods

Q: Is it ok to have sex on your period? Is it safer to have sex on your period?

A: There is an equal risk for contracting STIs or becoming pregnant (during vaginal sex), regardless of whether or not someone's on their period. Pregnancy is the result of sperm meeting an egg during ovulation. Ovulation is when an ovary releases an egg into the uterus. Keeping in mind that semen can live in the vagina for up to five days post-intercourse, if someone has sex during their period and then begins ovulating within the next five days, it can result in a pregnancy. Both partners are also still at risk for STIs and HIV, so always use a condom in addition to hormonal birth control.

Moral/Personal

Q: Is it normal to dream about sex?

A: Yes, it is perfectly normal to think, talk, and even dream about sex. Sometimes, people even have what is called "wet dreams" which occurs when seminal fluid comes out of the penis during sleep.

Q: Have you had sex?

A: That is a personal question and I will not answer personal questions.

Q: What is the right age to have sex?

A: That answer is going to be different for everyone. What I can tell you is that average age that Americans have sex for the first time is 17 ([Guttmacher Institute](#)). However, when a person decides to have sex, it is a deeply personal choice and should not be influenced by the choices of others.

Q: Is it wrong to be gay?

A: Whether or not it is "right or wrong" is a matter of personal belief and family values. Regardless of sexual orientation or beliefs, all individuals deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.

Q: Is abortion wrong?

A: Whether or not it is “right or wrong” is a matter of personal belief and family values. I can tell you that it is legal and only the person pregnant can make that decision for themselves. You should talk to a trusted adult about what your family believes on this issue.

Drugs/Alcohol/Other Miscellaneous Questions

Unless you have had specific training/knowledge about ATOD (alcohol, tobacco, other drugs), you should refrain from giving any specific information. However, it is ok to make general statements regarding ATOD and the risks associated with usage. You can also refer students to the <https://centerstone.org/teen/> website for information.

Additionally, students may ask you questions that seem totally unrelated to anything. These should be answered by referring them to a trusted adult or a medical professional. For example:

Q: What is meningitis?

A: All that I can tell you about meningitis is that it is not an STI. For further information, you should ask your doctor. Or, with parent permission, research that topic online.