


Sexual Health



Sexual health is your physical, emotional, and social wellbeing in relation to your sexuality.

SEXUAL HEALTH INCLUDES:

- A positive and respectful approach to sex
- The possibility of having pleasure with sex
- Sex without violence, force, or discrimination
- Safe sex practices that help prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs)

REASONS TO TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

- You have less desire for sex or other problems during sex.
- You have experienced sexual trauma.
- You are concerned that you may have a sexually transmitted infection.



WAYS TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM GETTING STIs

- If you are under age 26, ask your health care provider about a vaccine to prevent genital lesions that cause human papillomavirus (HPV) and some cancers.
- For no or extremely low risk, have sex with only one partner who does not have an STI and has sex with only you.
- Limit your number of sexual partners. The more partners you have, the higher the risk.
- Discuss “safer sex” with a partner before having sex.
- Don’t have sex with someone who has genital sores.
- Use a latex condom every time you have sex. Doing this does not get rid of the risk entirely, but greatly lowers it. Use polyurethane condoms if you or your partner are allergic to latex. If you use a lubricant, make sure it is a water-based one.
- Don’t use alcohol or drugs before you have sex. You may be less likely to use a condom if you are drunk or high.
- Get tested. If you have an STI, follow your health care provider’s advice for treatment and what to do to prevent spreading the infection.