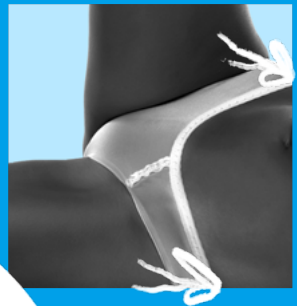
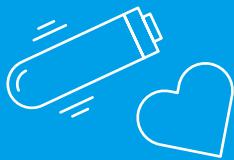
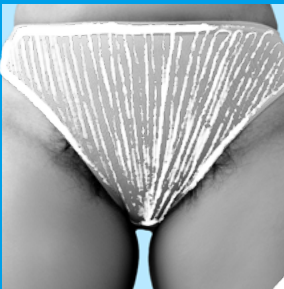
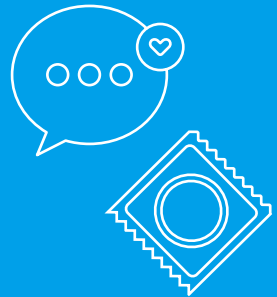


SEX GUIDES

VAGINAL SEX

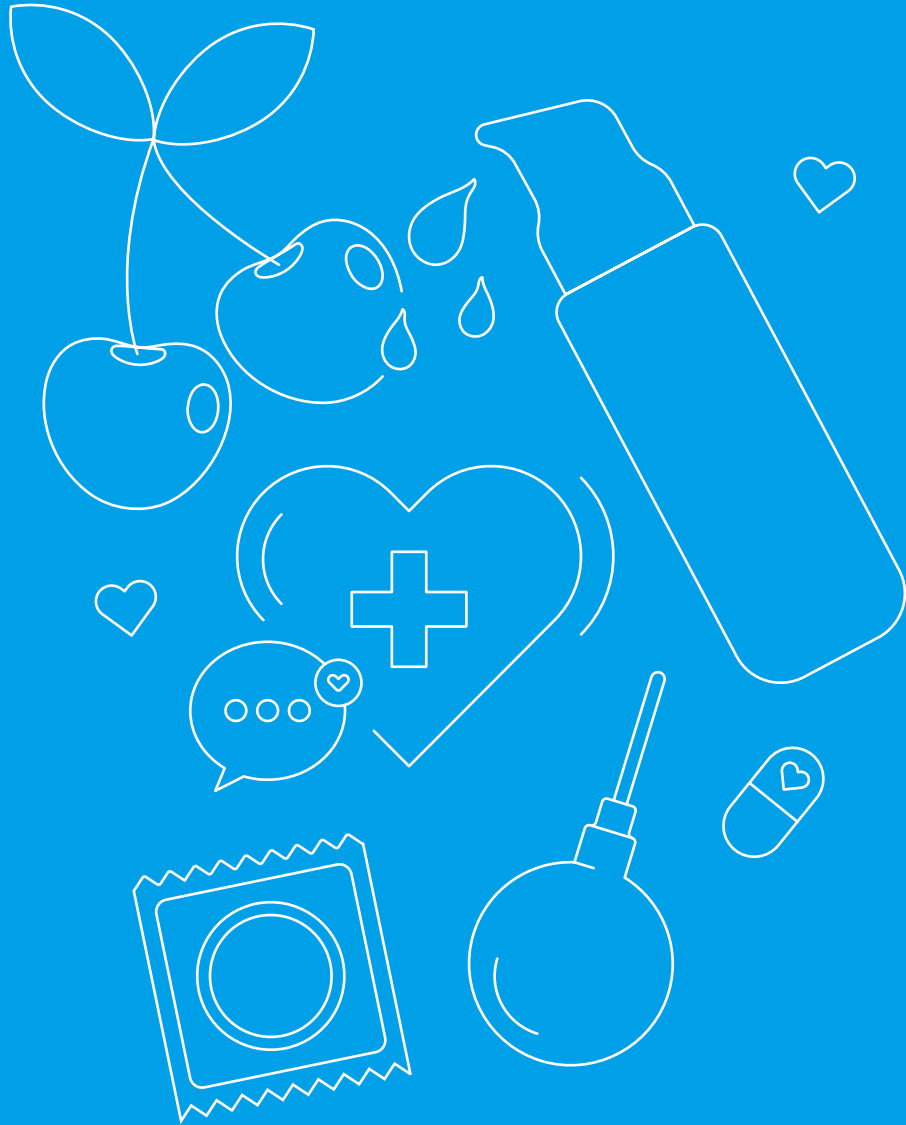


#SEXWITHOUTSHAME

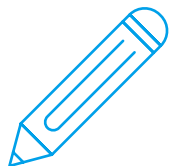


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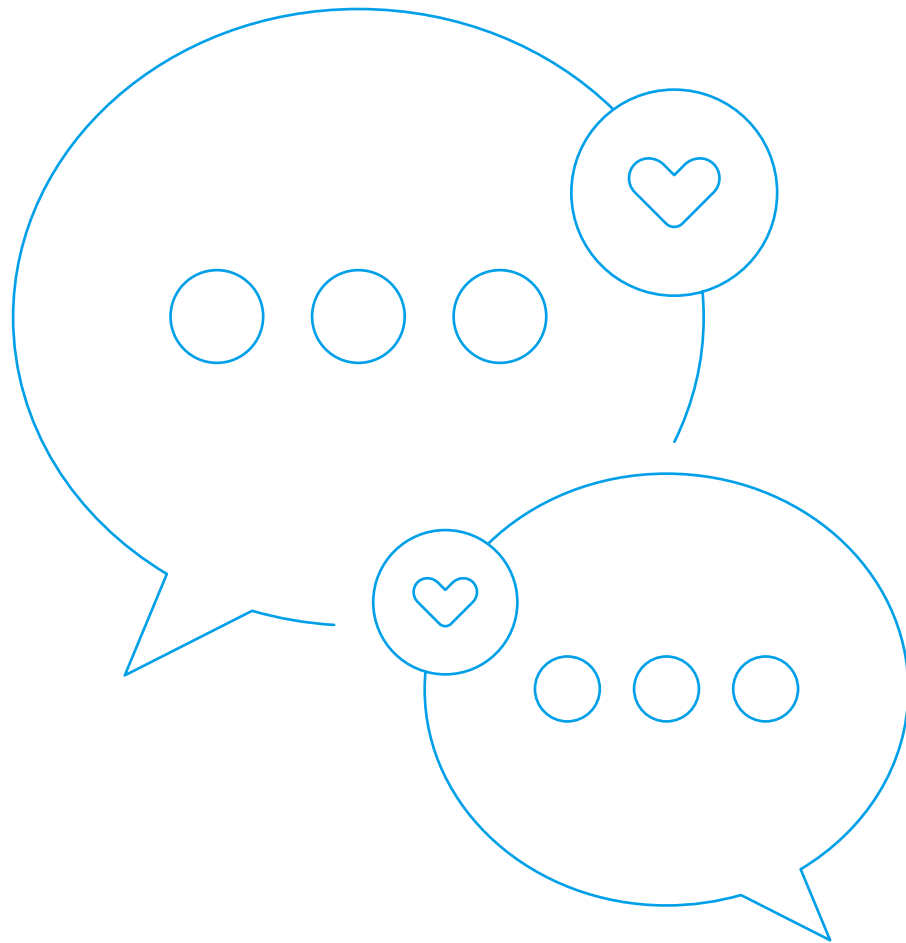


Vaginal sex glossary / vaginal slang



BV	Bacterial Vaginosis and is a bacterial infection in the vagina which can cause changes in vaginal discharge.
Clitoris	A small soft bump outside the vagina which is very sensitive. Many people need the clitoris to be stimulated to have an orgasm. Parts of the clitoris are deep inside your body, and can be stimulated from the inside of the vagina.
Contraceptives	Medicines or device used to stop you getting pregnant.
Dental Dam	A small square of latex placed between the mouth and the body during oral sex to protect against STIs. They can be made from condoms.
Dilation	Stretching the vagina, which is important after having a vaginoplasty.
Douching	Putting water in your arse or vagina to clean it. If you were born with a vagina it can be unhealthy to douche.
Fertile	The sex you have can result in pregnancy.
Fingering	Stimulating the outside or inside of somebody's vulva, vagina, or arse hole using fingers.
Fisting	Putting a fist inside somebody's vagina or arse hole.
Foreplay	Things you can do before sex to make you and your partner(s) more aroused. This can including kissing, dirty talk, masturbation, role play or anything that gets you and your partner(s) in the mood.
Gender Dysphoria	People viewing your gender as different from how it actually is.
HIV	A virus which can be passed on through sexual contact. It is carried in blood, semen, vaginal fluid and in anal mucus. There is not a high enough level of HIV in spit and pee to pass it on.
IUD	Stands for Intra-Uterine Device and is often called the coil. This is a method of contraception that can also be used after unprotected sex.

Labia	The skin or lips, which are at either side of the vagina. There are an inner set and an outer set, and these can look different between people.
Lube	A slippery liquid which can be put onto the penis, fingers, fists or sex toys before sex to help them go in, make it more comfortable and reduce the risk of tearing. We recommend using water or silicone based lube, depending on the type of sex you're having.
Masturbation	Stimulating your arse hole, penis, testicles, vagina, clitoris, and/or vulva with your hands and fingers, sex toys or other objects.
Penetrative	The person putting something inside someone's body, including a penis, a sex toy, or fingers. You may hear this called being a "top".
PEP	Short for Post-Exposure Prophylaxis, it is emergency medication that HIV negative people can take if they have been exposed to HIV within the last 72 hours. It is sometimes called PEPSE, for 'PEP after sexual exposure'.
PrEP	Short for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, its is medication that HIV negative people can take to protect themselves from HIV.
Receptive	The partner putting something inside someone's body, including a sex toy, penis, or fingers. You may hear this called "bottoming".
Vers	Versatile, a term used to refer to someone who tops and bottoms.
Sexuality/ Sexual Orientation	Who someone is sexually attracted to, or has relationships with.
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections, which is any kind of disease passed on through sexual contact.
Thrush	A common yeast infection which can affect anyone and is commonly found in moist areas of the body including the mouth, penis, and vagina. It is usually harmless but can be uncomfortable. Thrush is not classed as an STI.
Trans	Short for transgender, meaning somebody whose gender is different from the sex they were assigned at birth.
Vagina	The tube that connects the uterus to the outside of the body.
Vaginoplasty	A type of surgery to make a new vagina.
Vulva	The area around the opening to your vagina, including the clitoris, labia, and vagina.



Let's talk about sex!

Knowledge helps us to address anxiety and lets people take control of their sexual health. Talking to your partner(s) about what you want from the relationship and the sex you're having might be uncomfortable, but opening up this discussion can be a really useful tool to help you have healthy and happy relationships.

Don't be scared to advocate for your own sexual wellbeing – sex should be fun and give you the opportunity to explore your own wants and needs as well as those of your partner(s).

Finding out what you and your partner(s) like opens you up to having more of the sex you love, exploring passion, and pleasure. Whether you do or don't like penetration, if you're into sex toys or oral sex, or you want to try mutual masturbation, talk about this!

Communication is a really important part of sex, as it lets your partner(s) know that you are enjoying it and that you consent. Sexual consent should always be confident and enthusiastic! You and your partner(s) can say no to sex at any point, even after sex

has started. It is possible to consent to certain types of sex but not others, for example wanting to have oral sex but not anal. If your partner(s) says no at any point, you should be understanding and respect their boundaries.

It is normal for people to have different sex drives (how much you want to have sex). This can change, sometimes suddenly if you are stressed or you have started new medication, or it can be a gradual change over time. It can be frustrating if yours or your partner(s) sex drive changes, but it is important to respect that their boundaries, and have an honest and open discussion about both of your needs.

If you would like any support with your sexual health and wellbeing, get in touch with LGBT Foundation's Sexual Health Team by emailing sexualhealth@lgbt.foundation or calling **0345 3 30 30 30**.

You'll also find loads of information, including a list of services we offer at lgbt.foundation/sexualhealth

Feeling myself



Sex can be just as good solo as it can be with a partner(s). Masturbation (sometimes called wanking) is normal and safe, and anyone can do it!

Masturbation can be a fun and safe way to explore your own body and relax. It can help you understand what you do and don't like sexually, and get used to having parts of your body touched in a sexual way. Learning more about your body can improve your body image and help you feel more comfortable telling or showing your partner(s) what you like and don't like.

Some people get pleasure from touching their vagina, clitoris, vulva, and/or arse hole. You could just use your hands and fingers, try rubbing against objects such as pillows, or use sex toys (for more info on sex toys, see our 'toy joy' section). If you're using sex toys, condoms can help you reduce the risk of transmitting STIs. Make sure to cover the sex toy with a new condom for each hole and partner.

Masturbating can lead to an orgasm, but you don't have to cum if you don't want to or can't. There's no right or wrong way to masturbate, and you can do it as little or as often as you like. If you're masturbating frequently or for longer sessions, lube can help you reduce friction and injury.

Some people masturbate together with their partner(s), which is called mutual masturbation. Remember that there is a risk of STI transmission if you touch somebody else's penis, vagina, or arse and then touch your own, or if you use a sex toy which somebody else has used before you without changing the condom.

Know your body!



Changes in your body could indicate a problem such as an STI or other infection. For example, if your periods or discharge change in frequency, amount, colour, texture or smell this could be because something's not quite right.

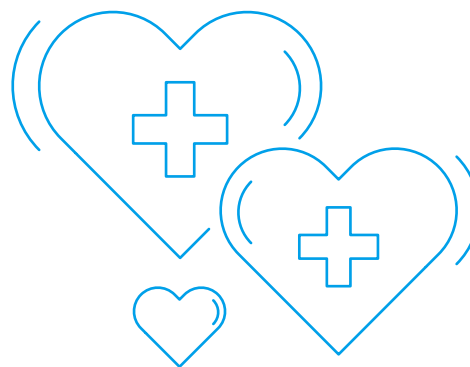
Vaginal infections aren't always passed on through sex - for example, you could get thrush or bacterial vaginosis (BV) because you're stressed, or because you've been wearing tight underwear or using heavily scented products to clean.

To protect yourself, know what is normal for your body and if you're worried about any changes see a health professional, such as a doctor or nurse at a sexual health clinic.

If you're having regular unprotected sex, we recommend a full sexual health screening as often as every 3 months.

You can get a full screening at a sexual health (GUM) clinic. This service usually tests for HIV, chlamydia, syphilis and gonorrhoea. You'll pee in to a pot and swab your anus and/or vagina with a cotton bud, in a private space. Nurses will also draw bloods and take a swab from the back of your throat.

If you have had a vaginoplasty you will usually need to douche to keep your vagina clean. Some people do this every week, after sex, or dilation. How you douche will be different depending on the surgery you had. It is important to talk to your surgeon on how to keep your vagina clean.



Strike a pose!

Some positions mean that the fingers, penis, or sex toy can penetrate deeper, and they can put pressure on different parts of your vagina. Everyone is different, so it is completely normal if you don't like a position.

Being in a position where you're bent forwards at your hip, like doggy style, or lying on your side or back with your knees closer to your chest, can allow for deeper penetration.

Being on top can also help you to control the angle of the fingers, sex toy or penis that are going in to your vagina, and the speed too!

If you enjoy rubbing your clitoris more than penetration, positions where your legs are open will make it easier for you and your partner(s) to rub it with their fingers or a sex toy, or you can try rubbing your clitoris during penetration if you enjoy both.

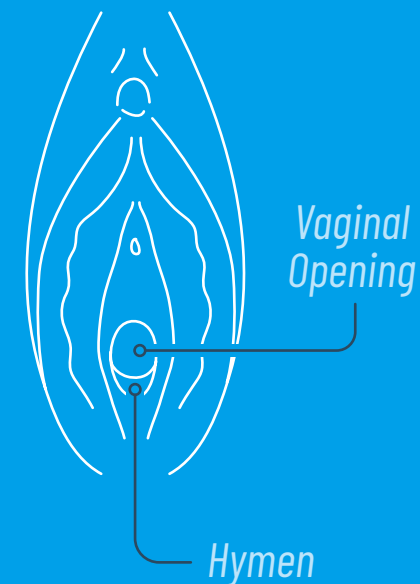
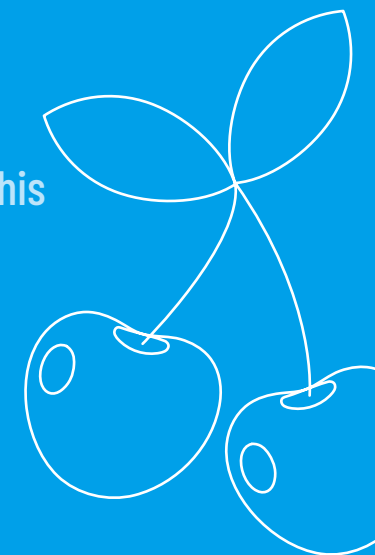
Cherries don't pop!

People talk about popping cherries, deflowering, or taking virginities, and this makes sex sound painful and scary.

Sometimes people will expect there to be blood when someone has receptive vaginal sex for the first time. These ideas all come from confusion about what a hymen is.

The hymen is a thin layer of skin which partially covers the opening of the vagina. It is flexible and can naturally stretch, from something as simple as fingering yourself, playing sports, or inserting a tampon. Hymens do not fully cover the vagina – or else menstrual blood wouldn't be able to escape, and you wouldn't have a period.

The hymen should stretch when you have sex, not break. Sex can cause your hymen to tear, bleed, and be painful if you're going too fast – so slow down and lube up!

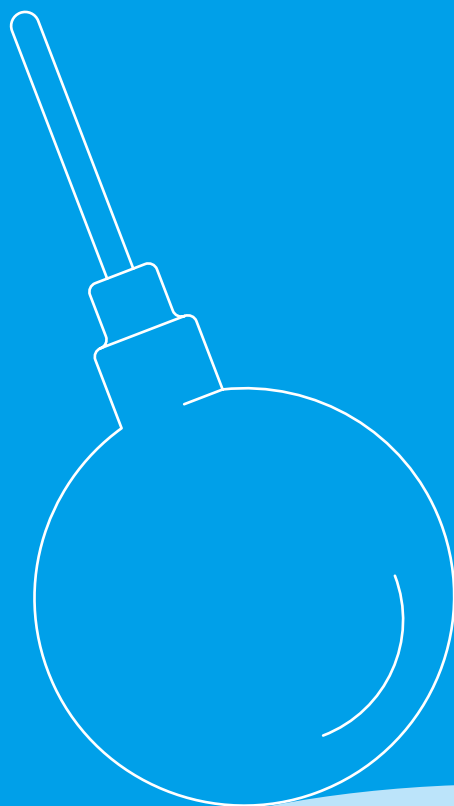


To douche or not to douche?

If you were born with a vagina and don't take testosterone, you don't need to douche. Your vagina is self-cleaning and douching can lead to vaginal dryness, irritation and infections like Bacterial Vaginosis (BV) and Thrush. The most you need to do to keep yourself clean is to use a mild, unscented soap around your labia (the lips) when you shower or bathe.

If you have had a vaginoplasty you will usually need to douche to keep your vagina clean. Some people do this every week, after sex, or dilation. How you douche will be different depending on the surgery you had. It is important to talk to your surgeon on how to keep your vagina clean.

We recommend using a small bulb douche as this is easy to use and control. We do not recommend using douches that attach to a shower. It is harder to control the temperature of the water and the amount of water that goes inside you.



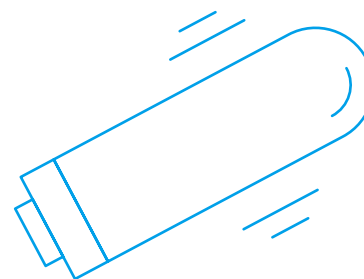
Toy joy

Sex toys are a great way to enjoy sex, either alone or with your partner(s)! They come in all shapes, materials, and sizes, each with their own unique uses – finding the best toy for you is all about exploring what's around!

Power?

Some toys vibrate, thrust, or rotate, with different speeds, power levels, and patterns. You can get mains powered, rechargeable or battery powered toys, or ones which don't have a power source at all (like dildos).

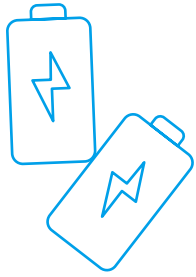
If your toy uses batteries and you're not going to use it for a while, take the batteries out before you store it. This avoids batteries draining or leaking and ruining your toy.



What do they do?

Using vibrating toys can feel too powerful at first – if you need to dull the vibrations you could try keeping your underwear on, or putting a towel or blanket between yourself and the vibrator to make it less powerful.

Some sex toys can be used inside the vagina to stimulate the vagina and clitoris from the inside (like dildos, some vibrators), some are made to be used outside the body and can be used to stimulate your clitoris (like small vibrators), and some do both at the same time! (like rabbit vibrators).



Safety & storage

When buying a sex toy, it is important to check what material it is made from because it could contain latex, which some people are allergic to. It also changes how you use and clean it.

If your sex toy is made of silicone, you should not use silicone lube with it because they could interact, leaving the surface of the toy sticky.

You should always clean your sex toys before and after each use, paying special attention to areas where two materials or parts of the toy meet (like around buttons or battery compartments).

We recommend always putting a condom over a sex toy, and changing the condom between partners and holes to avoid infection.



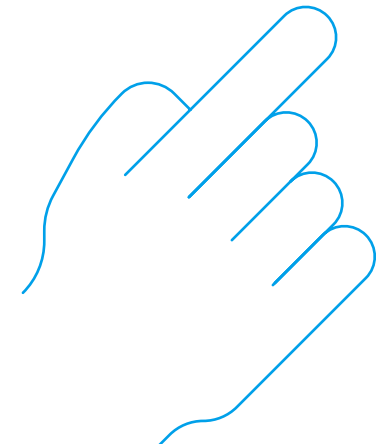
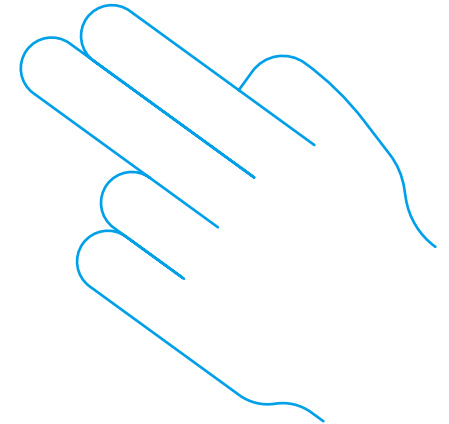
Foreplay is the way!

Foreplay can be a really fun way to start getting more sexual with a partner, and it can really help to get you in the mood for sex as well.

It also makes some vaginas produce lubrication and stretch for easier insertion of more fingers, a penis, a larger sex toy, or a fist.

It can also be a great time to do dirty talk and talk about what you want to do with your partner(s), and that can also help you get ready. Dirty talk is also a great way to give consent and learn what you and your partner(s) like!

Even if your vagina does not self-lubricate, foreplay is a great way to get you in the mood. You can use this time as a chance to put lube inside the vagina by fingering yourself or your partner, and that way there will be enough lube when you use something bigger.

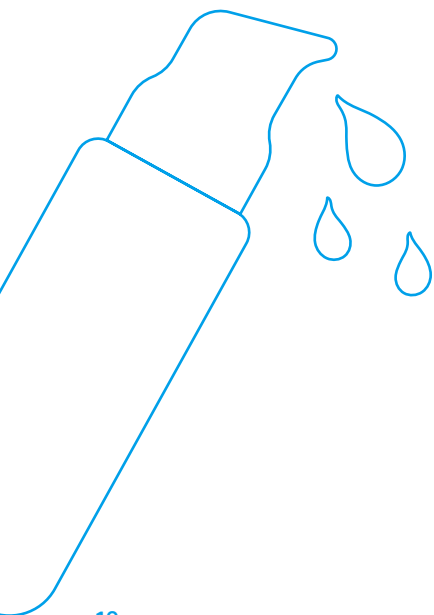


Lube it up!

Using lube is also important, especially if your vagina does not make enough lubrication on its own.

If you do not use lube, it can cause the lining of your vagina to tear, which is painful and it can also tear the condom if you are using one. Both of these increase the risk of HIV and STI transmission.

Water and silicone based lube are the best for vaginal sex, though you cannot use silicone based lube with silicone sex toys. This will damage the sex toy and make it unsafe to use again.



If you are using sex toys, it is important to use a condom, and change the condom every time the toy is used in a different hole or on a different person. This will protect you and your partner(s) from HIV and other STIs.

If you are fingering or fisting, you can use gloves or condoms on your hands or fingers to protect against STIs that are passed on through contact, like syphilis.

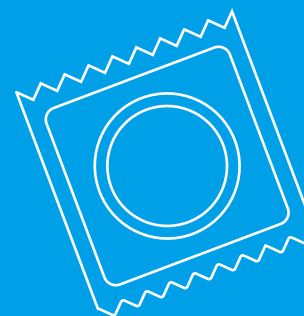
Do not use petroleum jelly or any other random things such as oils, butters, and moisturisers that you have lying around your bedroom as lube, as these can break the condom or harm your vagina, and potentially lead to thrush or Bacterial Vaginosis (BV).

Wrap it up!

Using a condom is the most effective way to stop you and your partner(s) from getting HIV and other STIs, and to prevent unwanted pregnancy.

Before using a condom, you need to check that it has not passed its best before date. Condom packs should have the kite mark and the CE mark to show the condoms are good quality. You should only use one condom at once, because using more than one increases the likelihood of them both breaking.

If you or your partner(s) are allergic to latex, there are many varieties of latex-free condoms. Condoms come in varying sizes, textures, and materials, so have some fun experimenting to find the right one for you!



If you are using sex toys, it is important to use a condom, and change the condom every time the toy is used in a different hole or on a different person. This will protect you and your partner(s) from HIV and other STIs.

If you are fingering or fisting, you can use gloves or condoms on your hands or fingers to protect against STIs that are passed on through contact, like syphilis.

You could also use internal condoms (sometimes called femidoms or female condoms) which are latex-free. It is important to change the condom between partners and holes, both to avoid the transmission of STIs and HIV but also because bacteria found in the arse can cause harm if it gets in your vagina.

Give a dam!

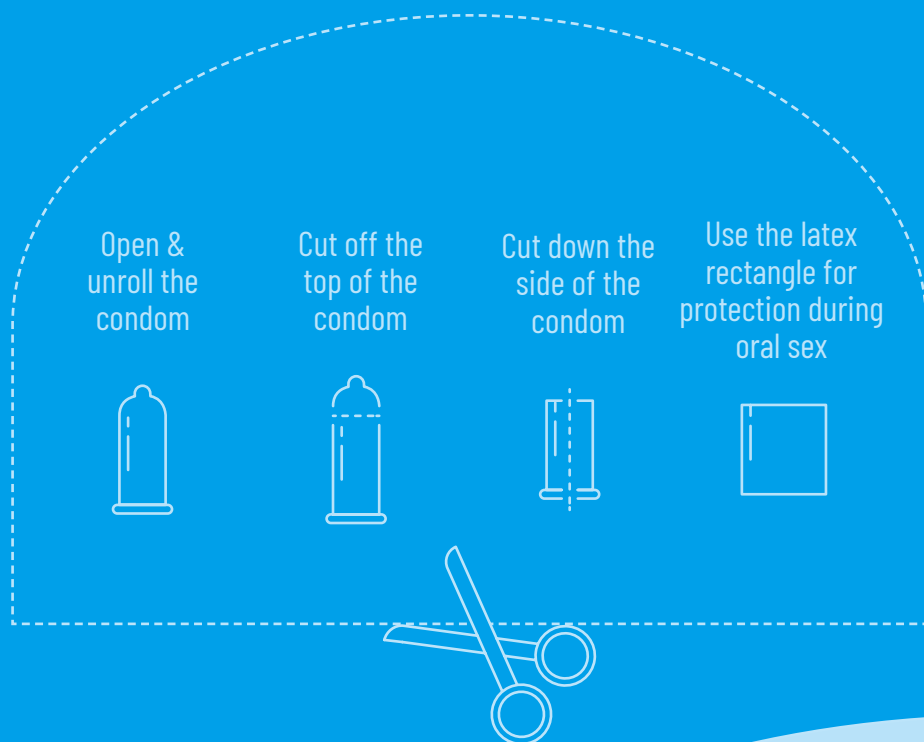


If you are rimming or giving cunnilingus, it is important to use a dental dam.

Although there is no data to suggest that you can get HIV from rimming, Hepatitis A is most often caught through rimming. It is also possible to get other STIs like gonorrhoea and syphilis from rimming.

Dental dams can be made from a condom, and they can help to stop any bodily fluids carry STIs in your mouth.

You should never reuse a dental dam once, and you should always make sure you use the same side.



Be PrEPared!



PrEP is a pill that can prevent you from getting HIV. Before you start taking PrEP it is important to test for HIV to make sure you are HIV negative before taking it.

If you begin taking PrEP and you are living with HIV it can make managing your treatment more complicated in the future.

You can take PrEP daily, or you can take it before, during, and after sex (sometimes called event-based dosing). How you take it depends on the sex you will be having and on which works best for you.

Event-based dosing will not work for you if some or all of your risk is from receptive vaginal sex. This is because it takes at least 7 days for PrEP levels to build up in the vaginal tissue. If you're the penetrative partner in vaginal sex, event-based dosing may work for you.

If you **daily dose**, this protects against HIV from all forms of sex. It is ok if you miss a day, as long as you take it for the rest of the week. Daily dosing works best if you take it the same time every day, so it helps to make it part of your routine. Leave it next to your toothbrush and toothpaste so you remember to take it every morning, or next to your bed so you take it when you wake up. You don't need to take PrEP forever; if you decide to stop having sex and you're not at risk of getting HIV any more, you can stop taking it.

PrEP is great for people who worry a lot about HIV, even when they use a condom and want a bit more peace of mind. It can also be good for people who are allergic to latex, or struggle to find the right fit with condoms, although there are now more ways to find the right condom for you. Finally, it is also good for people who don't like the feeling of condoms and prefer the feeling of skin-to-skin contact.

PrEP can have some side effects. It can interact with your kidneys, and make them not work as well as they should. If you are on PrEP you need to speak to your doctor about getting a kidney function test every three months. If the test shows your kidney function has been affected, you may need to come off of PrEP for a while to allow your kidneys to return to normal, and then you can start taking it again.

PrEP does not interact with any hormonal treatment or contraceptive, though it can interact with some other medications, so it is worth speaking to your GP if you are on other medication and worried about interactions.

PrEP is not currently available on the NHS in England and Northern Ireland but it is in Wales and Scotland, subject to you meeting certain criteria which will vary by country. It can also be bought legally online, though it is important to make sure you are using a website you can trust such as www.iwantprepnov.co.uk



PEP, PEP!

PEP stands for Post Exposure Prophylaxis. It is a strong combination of HIV medicines which can help stop you getting HIV after potentially being at risk of getting it.

You can get PEP from a Sexual Health Clinic if it is open, and from A&E at any time. When you arrive at the Sexual Health Clinic or A&E, you can ask at the front desk to speak to a doctor as you think you have been exposed to HIV and would like to take PEP.

PEP is available for free on the NHS, but it is very expensive, so it is only given to people who meet certain risk criteria. You will be asked questions about the HIV status of the person you have had sex with, and the kinds of sex that you had.

PEP is a 28 day course of medication, and you need to start taking it within 72 hours of unprotected sex. It will be more effective the quicker you take it, with some guidelines recommending that you start within 24 or 48 hours.

The chance of you being given PrEP changes depending on your answers to these questions, and details around the risk incident, so it is important you are honest with them about what happened.



Trouble 'shooting'?

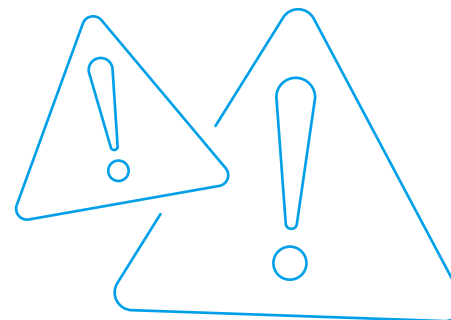
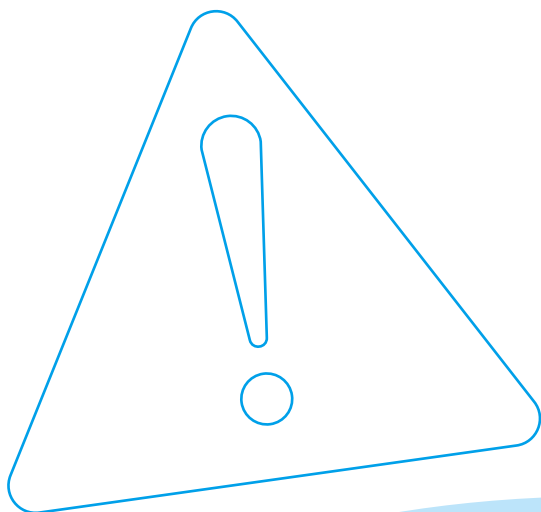
People have different needs and wants when they have sex. Some people might just want a quickie, and others might want longer, more intimate sessions.

How you want to have sex can also depend on when you do it, who you do it with and how. If you are having sex you really enjoy then you might cum more quickly than usual.

This can make some people worry about not pleasing their partners, and this is perfectly normal. Try talking to your partner and coming up with a few simple words to use if you are close to cumming, like "wait" or "hold it". This way, you can take the attention off you, and maybe use a sex toy with your partner to keep them in the mood. When the sensation is over, get back to what you were doing.

Also remember that you don't need to cum to have great, exciting and fulfilling sex.

You may have heard the term 'squirting' which is often used to describe when people with vaginas cum and produce fluids. If you find that you do squirt or cum a lot, it can help to put a towel or blanket down so it is easier to clean up.



If having something inserted into your vagina is painful, this may be because you're too anxious, or because of a health issue. If you're concerned, speak to a medical professional. You might be tempted to use numbing sprays or numbing lubrication to reduce pain and delay orgasm, but this may have a numbing effect on your partner(s) and delay their orgasms too. It can also stop you from feeling any tears which may happen if you're not using enough lube, which can lead to pain later on and an increased risk of HIV and other STIs.

People who have an uncircumcised penis may struggle to pull back their foreskin fully when they are erect. This may be because their foreskin or their frenulum is too tight. If the foreskin is pulled too far back during

any type of sex, this can be painful, and cause tearing. Tight foreskins may be more difficult to keep clean, and dry, which can increase the likelihood of infections like thrush. If you're experiencing any pain or discomfort, we recommend talking to a medical professional about this.

There can sometimes be medical reasons why people cum too quickly, or struggle to cum. This may be harmless, but could be a symptom of another health problem. We recommend talking to your GP if you're worried.



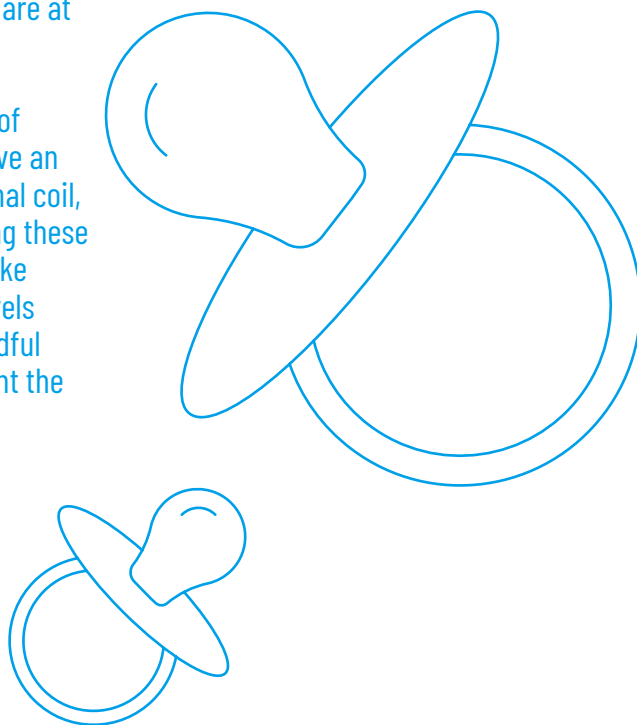
Trying to get pregnant?

If you are currently trying to get pregnant, there are a few things to be aware of.

There are some things that you can do to help you to get pregnant. By tracking your period, you can then understand when in your menstrual cycle you are most likely to get pregnant. There are apps that can track this for you, or you can do it on your own. You can also pay for tests which will show you when you are at your most fertile.

If you currently use a method of hormonal contraception or have an IUD, known as the non-hormonal coil, then you will need to stop using these to become pregnant. It may take some time for your fertility levels to return to normal, so be mindful that you might not get pregnant the instant you stop taking them.

For some trans men and non-binary people, carrying a pregnancy can trigger gender dysphoria. For a healthy pregnancy, you will likely need to stop taking testosterone if you are currently taking it.



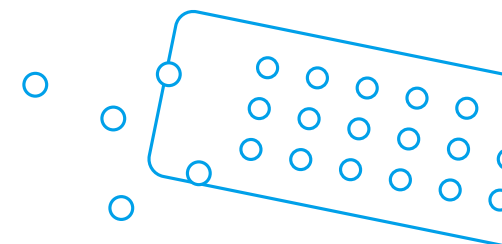
Avoiding pregnancy

If the sex you are having can result in unwanted pregnancy, it is important to use contraceptives (something to stop you getting pregnant) so you can just focus on having a good time.

Condoms are the only method of contraception which protect against STIs as well as pregnancy, and these work for all people with vaginas. If you or your partner(s) are allergic to latex, there are many varieties of latex free condoms. Condoms come in varying sizes, textures, and materials, so have some fun experimenting to find the right one for you! You could also try internal condoms, sometimes called female condoms or femidoms, which are latex-free.

If you're using condoms to prevent pregnancy, it's important that you hold on to the base of the condom while withdrawing from the vagina as spilled fluids could lead to unwanted pregnancy.

Contraceptives can be short or long acting and contain hormones or be hormone-free. Examples of short acting contraceptives include pills (oral contraceptives), vaginal rings, and hormonal patches. Examples of long acting contraceptives include implants, injections, and IUSs (intrauterine systems) or IUDs (intrauterine devices), small plastic devices which sit inside the uterus. IUS contain hormones, while IUDs don't.



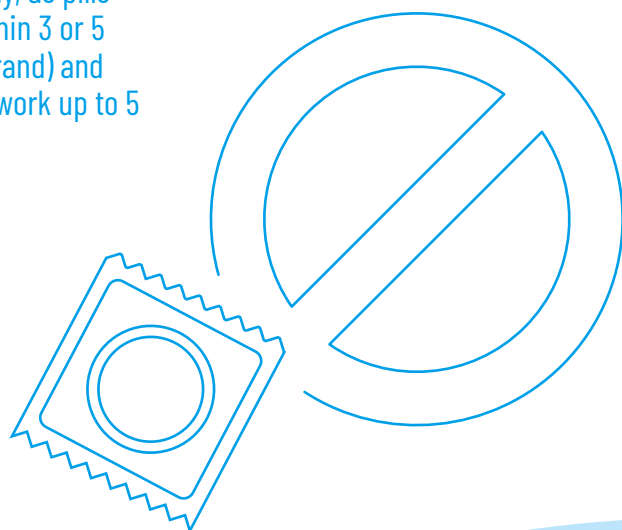
Hormonal contraceptives are another common method of preventing unwanted pregnancy, and are very effective. They can have side-effects which will vary from person to person. In some people, hormones can cause low mood, weight gain, and other side-effects, so it is always important to talk about hormones with your doctor.

If you do have unprotected sex, you can take an emergency contraceptive pill or use an IUD as emergency contraception to prevent pregnancy. You can get this for free from contraception clinics, Sexual Health Clinics and some A&Es, walk-in centres and GPs. You can pay for emergency contraceptive pills from some pharmacies. You need to access this quickly, as pills will only work if taken within 3 or 5 days (depending on the brand) and emergency IUDs will only work up to 5 days after sex.

If you are taking testosterone, you should avoid contraceptives containing oestrogen as this can reduce testosterone's effectiveness. It is fine for you to take the morning after pill, as both brands available in the UK are progesterone-based.

If you are taking testosterone, your pregnancy risk is reduced but not gone, so it is still important to use a method of contraception.

If you do become pregnant and are unsure whether you want to continue the pregnancy, a medical professional can offer you advice on your next steps and help you arrange a termination if this is what you want.



FAQs

“My partner still sees me as a man, what can I do?”

“Your partner(s) should always recognise how you identify your gender, whether you identify as a man, woman or as non-binary. You can try explaining to them how you identify, and maybe encourage them to look up more about being trans. Also you can talk to them about how it makes you feel when they still think of you as a man. Your feelings are always valid, and they should respect how you feel.”



“How do I know if I can trust my new partners?”

“It is normal to be nervous around a new partner and this can make it harder to trust them. If they are new in your life, you are still getting to know each other, and figuring out what you like to do during sex. It could be a good idea to dirty talk a little over the phone, or to meet in public and talk for a little before sex, so you know more about them and what they are like as a person. Communication is key to building trust!”



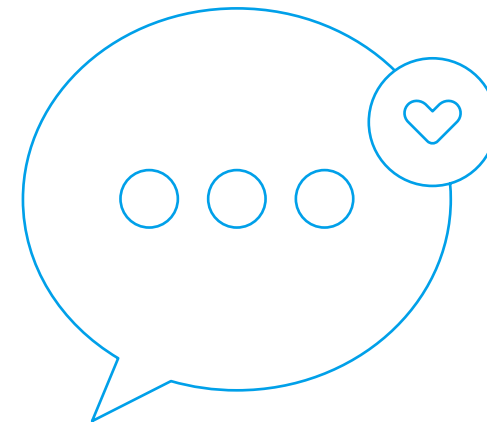
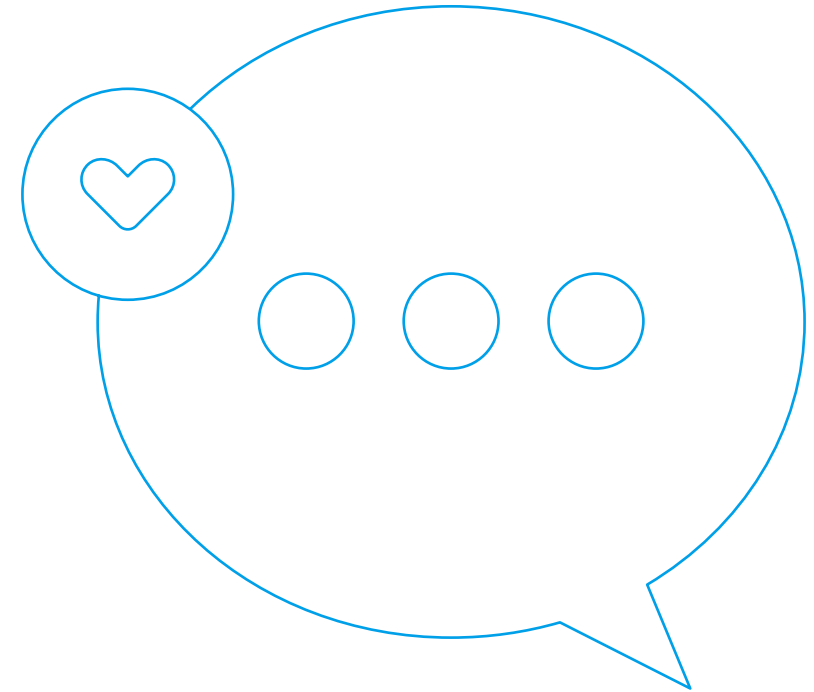
“I recently ended up with cystitis, how can I stop it from happening again?”

“Cystitis is a Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) which affects your bladder. UTIs can also affect the urethra or kidneys. People with vaginas can get UTIs more easily because their urethra is shorter, so it is easier for bacteria to travel to their organs. UTIs aren’t always avoidable, but peeing after sex, wiping from front to back when you go to the toilet, and drinking plenty of water can help to prevent them. Drinking cranberry juice is a traditional method but there is not evidence to suggest this helps more than staying hydrated with water or other drinks. UTIs aren’t classed as STIs.”



“More information is needed on the relationship between arousal and vaginal comfort and safety”

“We agree! When people with vaginas become aroused, their vagina will stretch to make penetration easier. This is why foreplay is not just something you do for a bit of fun, but can also help to make sex easier, and reduce the risk of tearing and HIV and STI transmission. Some vaginas also self-lubricate, but not all do, and this can change with age, or if you start taking new medication. It is important to know your body and what works for you”



WE EMPOWER LGBTQ+ PEOPLE TO REALISE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL, EVERY DAY.

All LGBTQ+ people deserve to have fulfilling sex lives and intimate relationships without fear or shame.

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