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Safer Sex Practices

An OUTSaskatoon Resource

Terminology and Abbreviations

Tribadism or frottage: vulva-to-vulva contact between two people, or rubbing one's genitals against a partner's body (thigh, stomach, buttocks, etc.) with or without clothing for sexual stimulation.

Fingering: inserting one or more fingers into a partner's vagina or anus to give them sexual stimulation.

Hand Job: using one's hand to stimulate a partner's penis.

Fisting: inserting one's entire hand into a partner's vagina or anus to give them sexual pleasure.

Cunnilingus: using one's mouth and tongue to pleasure a partner's vagina and vulva. Commonly referred to as eating out.

Analingus: using one's mouth and tongue to pleasure a partner's anus. Commonly referred to as rimming.

Felatio: using one's mouth and tongue to pleasure a partner's penis.

Sex Toys: any object or device used for sexual stimulation. May include dildos, vibrators, strap-ons, butt plugs, anal beads, nipple clamps, and many other options!

BDSM: an umbrella term for different kinds of consensual and communicated kinky pleasure play. Includes sexual practices such as bondage (being restrained or tied up), discipline (chastising or punishing, which may include whipping, flogging, or spanking), dominance (exercising control over another person), submission (submitting to another person), and/or sadomasochism (deriving sexual pleasure or stimulation from aspects of pain). These practices may or may not involve intercourse.

Latex Gloves: may be used on the hands when engaging in manual stimulation such as hand jobs and fingering.

Dental Dams: a thin rectangle of latex placed over the vulva and/or anus during oral sex.

Anal: inserting a penis or dildo into an anus.

Barebacking: anal sex without the use of a condom or protective barrier.

Internal Condoms: a protective latex barrier worn inside of the vagina in order to prevent STBIs and pregnancy

External Condoms: a protective latex barrier worn on the penis in order to

Safer Sex in Saskatchewan: Get Tested

Saskatoon

OUTSaskatoon

#201—320 21st Street West

306-665-1224 or toll-free at 1-800-358-1833

Every Thursday night from 5:00 to 8:00PM

Sexual Health Centre Saskatoon—Drop-in Sexual Health Clinic

210 2nd Avenue North, Lower Level

306-244-7989

Visit Website for most up-to-date schedule information:

www.shcsaskatoon.ca

Idylwyld Clinic—Saskatoon Sexual Health Clinic

101-310 Idylwyld Drive North

306-665-4642

Regina:

Sexual Health Clinic

2110 Hamilton Street

306-766-7779 or 1-800-268-9888

Planned Parenthood Regina

1431 Victoria Avenue

306-522-0902

Prince Albert:

Access Place/ Prince Albert Sexual Health Clinic

101 15th Street East

306-765-6540

*** Pick up Free Condoms and lube at any of these locations as well as at Pink Nightclub and Diva's Lounge in Saskatoon and the Q in Regina.**

Alternatives to Sex

Not all intimate experiences or affectionate behaviors must be sexual. The following suggestions are risk-free ways of showing affection if you or your partner are not ready to or do not wish to engage in sexual activities: **kissing, cuddling, holding hands, dancing together, stroking someone's hair, or giving someone a massage.**

Getting Honest About STBBIs

- The more people you engage in sexual activities with, the greater your chances of getting STBBIs. Always get tested before engaging in sexual activity with a new partner and practice safer sex.
- For HIV to be passed to another individual during sexual activity, one person must already have HIV. You can not tell someone's HIV status by their appearance. If you or your partner(s) think you might have been exposed to any STBBIs, the only way to know for sure is to get tested.
- If one partner has an STI and the other has HIV, there are increased risks to each individual — having an STI makes getting HIV easier and HIV can advance very quickly if one catches an STI
- HIV with a high viral load creates easier transmission, however, HIV can be transmitted at any level of viral load.

Be Accountable

Not being honest about your STBBI status puts both you and your partner(s) at risk. Controlling the risk of giving or receiving STBBIs includes being ready to inform your sexual partner about any risks associated with sexual activity and being ready to hear what they have to say to you in return. HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario (HALCO) also states that if there is a “realistic possibility” that you will pass on HIV to your sexual partner during sexual activity, you have the legal duty to disclose your status to them before making sexual contact.

Testing as Prevention

Despite many positive changes surrounding public knowledge of STBBIs, there is still a lot of stigma around testing. People are afraid of the outcome, afraid of the stigma associated with getting tested, or afraid of assumptions that arise from healthcare professionals. The best way to show that you care about yourself and your sexual partner(s) is to get tested regularly (every 3 months) and turn testing into a normal and positive experience.

prevent STBBIs and pregnancy. May be used on sex toys to protect against transmission of bodily fluids.

Abstinence: choosing to refrain from engaging in sexual activity. Abstinence can be a short or long-term decision as well as decided on a case-by-case basis.

Celibacy: similar to abstinence, however, it was originally used in a religious context to describe a “sacred vow” to avoid engaging in sexual activity (which also extends to romantic relationships and marriage.) To be celibate implies a long term commitment to abstaining from sex, potentially a lifetime.

Monogamy: *mono* means “one” and refers to a committed romantic and/or sexual relationship between two individuals.

Polyamory: the practice of having multiple sexual and/or romantic partners. Polyamory is not limited by gender, sexuality, or biological sex.

Friends with Benefits: a sexual relationship with little to no romantic components. These relationships often stem from friendships.

Swinging: describes a committed couple who engage in sexual relationships with other couples. Swinging relationships can be developed at parties or anonymously. These relationships can sometimes expand into polyamory, though swinging is usually understood as separate from polyamory.

Orgy: a group of people (3+) who have sexual relations together. This term describes only the sexual act of group sex and not a type of relationship.

Dominant/Submissive: describes a relationship that typically occurs between two people who experience sexual enjoyment from adopting either a dominant (having control) or submissive (subservient) role. Often these relationships can involve a certain amount of roleplaying which helps to explain the connection between dom/sub relationships and kinks or fetishes.

STBBI: Sexually transmitted (ex. Chlamydia) and other blood borne infections (eg. HIV/AIDS)

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus. A virus that attacks the immune system, your body's natural defense against disease.

Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP): A set of anti-HIV medications that HIV-negative people can take after coming into contact with HIV in order to reduce risk of infection.

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP): an oral pill that HIV-negative people can take daily in order to reduce their risk of HIV infection.

Communicating About Sex

One of the most important things in any relationship—sexual, emotional, or otherwise—is COMMUNICATION. When you are clear about activities you are comfortable or uncomfortable with you ensure that both you and your partner(s) will have a better sexual experience. Do not be afraid to express what you do or do not enjoy in bed and pay attention to verbal cues and body language throughout sexual activity to make sure that you're both enjoying yourselves.

The most effective tool in managing the risk of contracting any STBBIs is your voice. Talk to your partner(s). Whether a casual, ongoing, or one time encounter, you should talk to your sexual partner(s) about your limits and ask them about theirs. You are accountable for your own sexual history and responsible for ensuring that you are not passing any STBBIs on to new or different partners. By talking about getting tested early on, you can turn it into an easy and ongoing activity that shows your partner(s) that you care.

Consent

Consent is a voluntary and enthusiastic agreement to engage in sexual activities. All sexual activity must include consent and if you or your sexual partner insinuate that you do not wish for the sexual activity to begin or continue, put on the breaks immediately. Remember that a person who is intoxicated by alcohol and/or drugs is not able to provide consent and no sexual activity should take place until the individual is sober and able to consent to sexual activities.

Communicating with yourself

Before you begin to explore another person in a sexual way, it is often a good idea to explore what feels good to your own body. Masturbating with or without toys is a good way to figure out what feels good for you and what you could potentially enjoy feeling or doing with a partner. Setting aside some time to relax and explore yourself is valuable when it comes to communicating your likes and dislikes with others. Learning to respect your own body is the first step in respecting someone else's. You can purchase high quality sex toys at a reduced rate at Saskatoon Sexual Health.

How to Have Safer Sex

There is always at least some risk when engaging in sexual activity—sometimes the risk is lower and sometimes that risk is higher. This means that you should always be aware and ready to take control of your health. Remember to:

- **Keep your fingernails short and clean.** This helps to avoid injuring yourself or your sexual partner. Also, don't clip your nails too soon before fingering or fisting as damaged nail tissue can provide a route for the transmission of infections. You can use latex gloves with plenty of lube to reduce friction and to keep things wet.
 - **Keep your toys and body clean.** Clean your sex toys between uses with warm water and gentle soap or by running them quickly through the dishwasher (if they are dishwasher safe). Avoid sharing sex toys and keep your sex toys separate. Also, remember to be careful when using enemas or douches as these can tear the anal lining which makes it easier to contract an infection.
 - **Use fresh condoms, dental dams, and gloves, each and every time you begin a new activity.** This includes switching between vaginal and anal sex and switching between partners during a sexual experience. Also, be sure to use lube that doesn't contain oil (like silicone) because it breaks down latex. Condoms significantly lower your risk of getting or passing STBBIs, but can break or come off. To reduce the risk of condoms breaking, make sure you're using new condoms and a new (unused) one every time you have sex.
 - **Avoid unprotected contact with menstrual blood.** Giving oral sex to someone who is menstruating can increase the chances of HIV transmission.
 - **Use lubricant .** Gentle anal sex with lots of lube reduces the risk of an HIV infection, especially if you aren't using a condom. The more friction involved in a sexual act the more risk for tearing or infection. Use lots of lube to reduce friction.
 - **Ejaculating *outside* a person's anus, vagina, or mouth reduces the risk of HIV infection.** Pre-cum can still carry enough HIV to infect a person, however.
 - **Establish a safe word that means STOP.** If gags are used or the ability to speak is being inhibited during the sexual activity, use a specific hand gesture that means STOP. Do not share whips, flogs, canes, or other sharp objects if blood is drawn. Also, do not attempt BDSM without being advised, trained, or given explicit consent.
 - **Safe, sober, consensual sex is exciting and hot.** Drugs and alcohol impair a person's sexual judgment, especially when it comes to being safe or consenting to sex. So always gain verbal consent before and during sexual activity and make sure you and your partner are not too intoxicated to be aware of safety and respect.
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