

Emotions

What does it mean to have sex?

Different people have different definitions of sex. Anything that makes you feel aroused is sexual in nature. When you feel attracted to someone, there are many sexual behaviors that you might be comfortable with. Sex may or may not be one of them.

Health

How do I know if I am ready?

Choosing to have sex is a big decision, as well as a personal one. Here are some things to think about:

Physical Health: Sex can put you at risk for sexually transmitted infections, HIV, and pregnancy.

- Are you ready to go to a clinic for an exam?
- Do you feel comfortable purchasing and using condoms or other forms of birth control?
- Do you know how to correctly use various forms of contraceptives?

Emotional Health: Sex brings up various feelings and emotions.

- How will having sex affect your relationship with your partner?
- Do you feel pressured emotionally or physically by your partner?

Make sure you and your partner are both consenting to sexual activity and each step that you are taking. Make sure you are both feeling supported by each other in this decision.

- Values and Priorities: You need to decide if having sex right now would reflect your beliefs and priorities.
- What values have you learned about sex? Do you agree with those values?
- What would happen if you made choices your family, religion, or culture disapprove of?
- What are the things that are most important to you? Friends, family, sports, or school work might be important parts of your life.

If I am not ready for sex, what should I do?

There are certain steps you can take to help make your choice work for you.

- Choose friends that respect your decision to wait for sex.
- Decide what your sexual limits are and discuss them with your partner.
- Promise not to pressure one another to go past limits you're not comfortable with.

Ready?

- Talk to your doctor about what sort of contraception would be right for you. Discuss your risks for STI's and what can be done to prevent them.
- Talk with an adult you trust about the decision to have sex with your partner.
- Talk with your partner about the decision and talk about what would be most comfortable for the both of you

Or not?

- Find ways to express romantic feelings without engaging in sex, such as kissing, writing love notes or holding hands.
- Make a Sexual Health Plan. Decide when and under what circumstances you will be ready for riskier sexual activity and learn about birth control and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

It's important to make a plan before you have sex so you are prepared to make an informed and safe decision rather than a heat of the moment decision.

Have a Question?

Contact us at 612-825-2000 or
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Waiting

Who is choosing to wait to have sex?

While it may seem like everyone is having sex the truth is, they're not.

- According to the Minnesota Student Survey in 2010, only one out of five 9th graders and less than half of all high school seniors had ever had sexual intercourse. In other words, more than 50% of high school students are not having sex.

Your Future

- What should I do if my partner and I become pregnant unexpectedly?
- Do we feel most comfortable with abortion, adoption or parenting? What resources would we need for any of these decisions?
- Do we know what to do if either of us contracts an STI?
- Are we able to afford birth control? Do our parents have insurance? What ways can we access birth control at low to no cost?
- Is my partner respecting my sexual boundaries and needs? Am I respecting theirs?

What should I think about before I have sex?

Respect

- What values did my parents teach me about sex? Do I agree with those values?
- What would happen if I engaged in behaviors disapproved of by my family, my religion or my culture?
- What are my goals for the future? Will being sexually active help me reach my goals or get in the way?
- Do my partner and I feel comfortable engaging in this? Are either of us hesitant about having sex? If so, you might want to hold off.

Consequences

- Am I ready to go to a clinic for an exam?
- Do I feel comfortable purchasing and using condoms or other birth control?
- What would I do if I had to face an STI or a pregnancy?
- Am I being pressured emotionally or physically to have sex, or is it my decision?
- How would sex change my relationship?

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