LET’S TALK ABOUT

SEX!!!

OUR HOW-TO GUIDE ON HAVING MEANINGFUL DISCUSSIONS ABOUT SEX WITH YOUR PARTNER

PREVENTION OF STI’S & PREGNANCY

Abstinence/Celibacy: Most effective method for prevention of STI’s and pregnancy. Abstaining from sex refers to not having any form of sex (oral, anal or vaginal).

Self Masturbation: Another very effective method for prevention of STI’s and pregnancy.

Open Communication: It is important that you discuss sexual histories and any STI’s you have or had with your partner PRIOR to having any form of sex.

Birth Control: There are various forms of birth control. Although many of these forms prevent pregnancy, not all of them protect you from STI’s.

Monogamy: Having sex only with one person reduces your chances of contracting an STI. When you have multiple sex partners, your risk of STI’s increase, especially if they’ve had sex with others.

Know Your Status: Knowing your STI status is important for your health and could potentially save your life.

BIRTH CONTROL & BARRIER METHODS

Barrier Methods are effective in preventing both pregnancy and many STI’s. These include:

For Vaginal & Anal Sex: For Oral Sex & Anilingus:
Male condoms Dental Dams
Female condoms Flavored Condoms

GIVE CONSENT, GET CONSENT

Consent must be given EVERY TIME before a sexual act. If you received consent during a previous sexual encounter with this person, that does not mean you have consent for another encounter. Ask for consent and respect the answer. If a person is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, they cannot legally consent to sexual activity. Do not have sex with someone under the influence.

WHAT IS SEXUAL HEALTH?

“Sexual Health is a state of physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity” (World Health Organization, 2006).

WHAT IT INVOLVES

• Positive and satisfying relationships
• Valuing and feeling good about yourself
• Protecting yourself from getting or transmitting an STI to your partner
• Ability to communicate about sexual health with others (i.e. partners and health care providers)
• Recognizing and respecting our partners decisions about their own body

COMMUNICATING ABOUT SEX

The key to having safe and enjoyable “sex-periences” with another person is open communication. Since unprotected sex could compromise the quality of your health, it is necessary to discuss everything it entails.

• Unwanted Pregnancy
• Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI’s)
• In some cases, cancer or debilitating diseases

While condoms can help prevent pregnancy and reduce transmission of most STI’s, you are still at risk. Some STI’s are asymptomatic, meaning they show no symptoms, and can be transmitted through direct skin to skin contact. Having this conversation can help you determine how you want to move forward.
Asking open-ended questions encourages a more meaningful discussion on thoughts. Here are some conversation prompts to help you get started.

**CONVERSATION PROMPTS**

**GENERAL**
- Hey, can I ask you a question?
- So I was thinking...
- What are your thoughts about...
- Have you ever had sex before?

**TYPE OF RELATIONSHIP YOU WANT**
- What type of relationship are you looking for?
- Do you want to date exclusively?
- Are you interested in casually dating, or are you looking for something more serious?
- How often do you want to have sex?

**SEXUAL DESIRES AND BOUNDARIES**
- What sexual activities are you into?
- Is there anything you’re uncomfortable with sexually?
- Are you open to trying new things sexually?

**KNOW YOUR STATUS**
- Before we get intimate, it’s important that we discuss our STI histories.
- Have you ever been tested?
- Have you been tested recently?

The earlier you have the conversation, the better. Remember to be open to the

**YOU OR YOUR PARTNER ALREADY HAVE AN STI?**
- Having an STI does not mean the end of a good sex life. It’s best to speak with your medical provider about prevention, transmission, treatment, and physical effects.
- Extra precautions may need to be taken to prevent transmission to you or your partner.
- Gather factual information so you stay informed.

A trusted and reliable resource is cdc.gov.