

# a teen's guide to sexual health



## top 5 things you should know about sexual health

- Some of the most difficult and important decisions you'll make are about sex and relationships.
- It's important to talk to your partners about sex and what you both feel comfortable doing sexually, before you start.
- If you're thinking about having sex, learn how to protect yourself from things like pregnancy and STDs.
- Trying to prove yourself by being something you're not can make you unhappy and unhealthy.
- Take care of your sexual health by getting regular checkups.

## making decisions about sex and relationships

Some of the most important decisions in life are about sex and relationships. These decisions can affect your life plans – like school, job, and family. You might want to talk it through with a parent or other trusted adult.

You get to decide if you want to be in a relationship or not. You also get to decide what you want to do sexually or not. When to have sex is a personal decision. "Having sex" means different things to different people. It can include things like oral, vaginal, or anal sex. The only way to know what someone means by "having sex" is to ask. Trust your feelings about having sex. Don't do it if you don't want to.

Sex involves responsibility, like using condoms to help prevent STDs. If you have vaginal sex, you also need to talk to your partner about birth control.

It's wrong for anyone to pressure you to have sex. It's wrong for anyone to pressure you to not protect yourself from pregnancy or STDs. It's also wrong for you to pressure someone else. To learn how to talk about sex and consent, check out [bit.ly/Consent101](http://bit.ly/Consent101).

## what you can do to stay healthy

- When you have questions or need help, talk to your parents or other adults you trust – it may be awkward, but they want to help.
- Before you have sex with someone, talk to them about what you want and don't want, and make sure it's the right decision for you.
- Use birth control to prevent pregnancy if you have penis-in-vagina sex. Use condoms and dental dams to help prevent STDs during oral, vaginal, or anal sex.
- Get tested for STDs once a year if you've started having sex.
- Go to Planned Parenthood or another health care provider for birth control, STD testing, and sexual health checkups.



## Before you have sex with someone, think about these questions:

- What kind of emotional relationship do I want to have first? Sex is often safer and better with someone you trust and who cares about you.
- Can I be honest with them about what I want and don't want? You need to communicate openly and honestly to have safe and enjoyable sex.
- Why do I want to have sex with this person? You should have sex because you want to not because you feel pressure or want to get sex "over with."
- Am I ready to protect myself during sex? Use condoms or dental dams to protect each other from STDs during vaginal, anal, or oral sex. Use both condoms and birth control if you have penis-in-vagina sex to prevent pregnancy.

## center locations

### Cincinnati Surgical Center

513.287.6488

2314 Auburn Avenue | Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

### Dayton Health Center

937.226.0780

224 N. Wilkinson Street | Dayton, Ohio 45402

### Hamilton Health Center

513.856.8332

11 Ludlow Street | Hamilton, Ohio 45011

### Mt. Auburn Health Center

513.287.6484

2314 Auburn Avenue | Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

### Springfield Health Center

937.325.7349

1061 North Bechtel Avenue | Springfield, Ohio 45504

[www.ppswo.org](http://www.ppswo.org)

Find us on   

Planned Parenthood® is a registered trademark of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc.

Rev 6/20



Chat with a health educator today.  
Text "PPNOW" to 774636.

Call **1.800.230.PLAN** or visit **ppswo.org** to learn more or to find the Planned Parenthood Health Center nearest you.