

Health & Wellness Newsletter: On Campus Edition

Wellness & Prevention: Safer Sex

WELLNESS AND PREVENTION

How does sex relate to COVID-19?

Fluids, including respiratory droplets when you exhale, spit/saliva, and fluids from your nose, like mucus, can transmit COVID-19 and may be present during sexual contact. Like the common cold or seasonal flu that can spread during sex, COVID-19 can as well. People may be contagious even when they don't have symptoms.

If you or a partner may have COVID-19, avoid sexual contact and especially kissing. If you or your partner has a medical condition that could lead to a severe case of COVID-19, you may also want to skip sex even if you're feeling well.

Medical conditions of concern include moderate to severe asthma, diabetes, lung disease, heart disease, cancer, or a weakened immune system.

Information adapted from the New York City Health Department's Sex and Coronavirus Disease 2019 guidelines from March 27. These health recommendations may change as the situation evolves. Visit Planned Parenthood's COVID-19 and Your Sexual Health webpage at plannedparenthood.org/learn/health-and-wellness/covid-19-new-coronavirus/covid-19-and-your-sexual-health for more safer sex information.



Can COVID-19 be sexually transmitted?

We know that other coronaviruses do not transmit through sex, but we still have much more to learn about COVID-19. However, when people have intimate physical contact, it's very likely they'll come into contact with the fluids that we know can transmit the virus. Kissing, in particular, can easily spread the virus. COVID-19 has not yet been found in semen or vaginal fluid, but it *can* spread from direct contact with feces. Rimming (mouth on anus) may spread the virus, due to the potential contact with feces.

How can people practice safer sex during the outbreak?

Right now, social distancing is your best defense against COVID-19. *You* are your safest sex partner, and self-pleasure is a great option. Video dates, sexting, or chat rooms are also options. The next safest partner is someone in your residence; avoid sex with anyone outside your residence. Condoms and oral dams will prevent STIs and can reduce contact with saliva, mucus, or feces, especially during oral or anal sex. Plan for effective forms of birth control for the coming weeks (prescription delivery, IUD, or other long-lasting methods). Wash your hands before and after any sexual activity, and disinfect keyboards, touch screens, and/or any sex toys that you use for video chat, watching porn, or anything else. Talk with any partner(s) to create a plan for limiting your risk. Email wellness@babson.edu for questions or advice on safer sex.