

# YOUR GUIDE TO SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS



# WHAT MAKES A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP?

**A healthy relationship is a relationship where you feel safe and able to be yourself.**

## Honesty

Letting someone know how you feel, what you want, and if something is bothering you is important for a healthy relationship.

## Communication

There are lots of different ways to communicate, like talking, body language and actions. Take time to listen to each other.

## Compromise

It's okay not to agree on everything, compromise means finding something that works for you both.

## Being Equals

Nobody should be in charge in a healthy relationship. Being equals means making decisions together and respecting each other's thoughts and feelings.

## Respect

Everyone has different opinions but you should never be treated badly for your thoughts, feelings or the things you like.

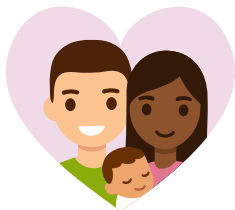
## Trust and Support

Trust feels different to everyone, but being able to talk openly, ask for help if you need it and feeling physically safe when you are together are all signs of a healthy relationship.

## DID YOU KNOW?

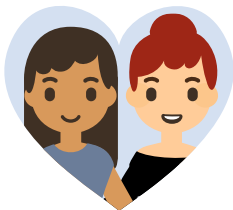
Controlling behaviour within relationships is illegal. This could include someone saying who you can/ can't see, what you can wear or making you feel frightened.

If you experience this you can speak to the Police (Non-emergency: 101 or in an emergency: 999) or any of the services listed in the back of this booklet.

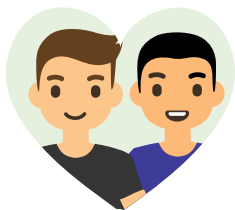


**You are entitled to a relationship free from abuse**

**You should never feel pressured into having sex**



**You have the right to change your mind**



**All sexual contact must be consensual**

**You are entitled to a happy and healthy relationship regardless of your sexuality or gender identity**



**There are people you can talk to for support**

# CONSENT AND THE LAW

**When we talk about consent to sex, this means someone agreeing to take part in sex or sexual activity. Consent needs to be given for each sexual act. You should never be pressured to consent if you don't feel comfortable.**

## SIGNS SOMEONE IS CONSENTING

- They are saying 'yes' enthusiastically
- They show positive body language (i.e. happy to touch you, smiling, kissing you back, moving closer to you)



## SIGNS SOMEONE MIGHT NOT BE CONSENTING

- Their body freezes up
- They go quiet
- They're saying "maybe" or "I'm not sure"

*JUST BECAUSE SOMEONE IS NOT SAYING 'NO' DOESN'T MEAN THEY ARE CONSENTING. OUR BODY LANGUAGE CAN SAY 'NO' IN MANY WAYS.*



## A PERSON CANNOT CONSENT IF:

- They are too drunk or high (from alcohol or drugs) to understand what is happening
- They feel pressured or threatened into saying yes
- They don't understand what they're agreeing to



**NEVER ASSUME THAT  
SOMEONE WANTS SEX  
BASED ON...**

**WHAT THEY'RE WEARING**

**IF YOU THINK THEY'RE  
FLIRTING WITH YOU**

**IF SOMEONE SAYS  
'NO' OR 'STOP',  
YOU MUST STOP  
IMMEDIATELY**





## THE POLICE MAY CONSIDER IT TO BE A CRIMINAL OFFENCE IF YOU...

- Have sex with someone who is too drunk or high to understand what is happening
- Make someone have sex if they don't want to, even if you're in a relationship
- Send sexual messages to someone under 16
- Take, share or keep sexual images of someone under 18 (even if they are of you)
- Have sex with someone under 18 if you're in a position of trust (e.g. teacher, sports coach, carer)

16

In the UK, the legal age of consent for sexual activity is 16.

The law is designed to protect young people from abuse by adults. It is not meant to criminalise people under 16 who are having sex, who are both a similar age. You can talk to our sexual health team in confidence.

Sexual activity with a child under 13 is a very serious offence.

**SEXUAL EXPLOITATION** is a form of sexual abuse. It is when a person is pressured or tricked into having sexual contact in return for something they need or want. It can be difficult to spot because often the people it's happening to feel like they are in a loving relationship. Exploitation can affect anybody of any age or gender.

**CRIMINAL OFFENCES** **RAPE** - When someone puts their penis into your vagina, bottom, or mouth without your consent.

**SEXUAL ASSAULT BY PENETRATION** - When someone puts another body part (anything that is not a penis) or an object into your vagina or bottom without your consent.

**SEXUAL ASSAULT** - When someone touches you in a sexual way with a body part or object without your consent. This includes kissing.

# CONTRACEPTION

If you're having sex, using contraception is the best way to reduce the chance of getting pregnant. There are many types of contraception to choose from and different methods suit different people. Some require a procedure to have them fitted and removed. See a quick summary of some types of contraception below:

## Implant

A small rod which releases a progestogen is placed in the upper arm under the skin.

- Well over 99% effective
- Lasts up to 3 years



## Injection

A progestogen is injected into the muscle, normally the buttock.

- Over 99% effective (if you get repeat injections on time, as advised)
- Lasts for 14 weeks



## IUS

(also known as the hormone coil)

A small T-shaped plastic device is placed in the uterus.

- Well over 99% effective
- Lasts up to 8 years, depending on type fitted



## IUD

(also known as the copper coil)

A small plastic and copper device is placed in the uterus.

- Well over 99% effective
- Lasts for up to 10 years



## Combined Pill

The pill contains oestrogen and a progestogen and is taken by mouth.

- 91% effective with typical use
- Taken every day for at least 3 weeks, with or without a break



## Progestogen-only pill (POP)

The pill contains a progestogen and is taken by mouth.

- 91% effective with typical use
- You need to take it every day, continuously



## Condoms (for penis)

Thin latex or plastic sheath is put over the erect penis or object.

- Around 82% effective with typical use
- Protects against some STIs
- Need to remember before sex



## Condoms (for vagina)

Thin plastic sheath that lines the vagina and covers the outer area of the vagina.

- Around 79% effective with typical use
- Protects against some STIs
- Need to remember before sex



## Patch

A small, thin, beige coloured patch, which you stick on your skin and it releases oestrogen and a progestogen.

- 91% effective with typical use
- Used every week for at least 3 weeks, with or without a break



**For information on a full range of contraceptive options, or to find out which method of contraception might be best for you, speak to your GP or local sexual health service [www.openclinic.org.uk](http://www.openclinic.org.uk)**

## EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION

Emergency contraception can stop a pregnancy happening after sex without contraception, if contraception fails or it is used incorrectly. There are two types emergency contraception options:

**Emergency IUD** (*copper coil*): Can be accessed at sexual health clinics and some GPs.

**Emergency hormonal contraception** (sometimes known as 'the morning after pill' or 'Plan B'): Can be accessed at all GPs, sexual health clinics, some community pharmacies and with some school nurses.

Visit [www.openclinic.org.uk](http://www.openclinic.org.uk) for more information on emergency contraception.

# SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are infections that are spread by sex or sexual contact.

Some are easy to get rid of and some you can't get rid of but you can get treatment.

Protect yourself against STIs by using condoms.



## CHLAMYDIA

**Symptoms:** No symptoms, pain when weeing, discharge, bleeding between periods or after sex.

**Test:** A urine sample or swab.

**Treatment:** Treated with antibiotic tablets.

## GONORRHOEA

**Symptoms:** No symptoms, discharge, bleeding between periods.

**Test:** A urine sample or swab.

**Treatment:** Treated with an antibiotic injection.

## SYPHILIS

**Symptoms:** No symptoms, sore on genitals, rash on palms of hands and soles of feet.

**Test:** A blood sample.

**Treatment:** Treated with antibiotics - this may be a single injection, a course of injections or tablets.

## HIV

**Symptoms:** No symptoms, possible to have flu-like illness a few weeks after infection.

**Test:** A fingerprick test or a blood sample, depending where you go for the test.

**Treatment:** There is no cure but HIV can be treated and controlled with antiretroviral drugs. If you're on effective treatment you can expect to lead a normal life and can't pass on HIV to anyone else.

If you have an STI and don't get treatment, it can lead to serious health problems

## GENITAL WARTS

**Symptoms:** Lumps, bumps or growths around genital/anal area.

**Test:** Doctor/nurse will look at affected area.

**Treatment:** Treatment is available for the warts, like using a cream or freezing treatment.

## GENITAL HERPES

**Symptoms:** Blisters, sores around the genital/anal area.

**Test:** Doctor/nurse will look at affected area and run a swab over any sores.

**Treatment:** There is no cure but you can ease symptoms and stop the virus from multiplying with anti-viral tablets.

## SOME COMMON STI SYMPTOMS INCLUDE...



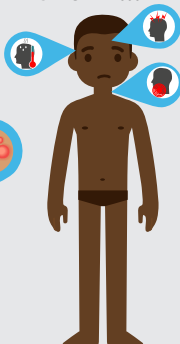
Burning  
when  
weeing



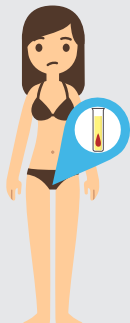
Discharge  
from tip of penis  
OR  
Unusual discharge  
from vagina



Rashes,  
lumps or  
bumps  
around the  
genital area



Flu-like  
symptoms  
(fever,  
headaches,  
swollen glands)



Blood in  
wee

If you have any of these symptoms and you're sexually active, visit your local sexual health clinic for a check-up.

# NHS SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES

## SEXUAL HEALTH TESTING

Free and confidential testing for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) is available at our sexual health clinics. If you are over 16, you may be able to order a free at-home STI testing kit.



## CONTRACEPTION

A range of contraception options are available at our clinics to help prevent unintended pregnancy.



## C-CARD

The C-Card is a card that gives people aged 13+ quick and easy access to free condoms. You can register for a C-Card at sexual health clinics, some pharmacies, online (ages 16+ only) or when you see the Sexual Health Team out and about.



## INFORMATION AND ADVICE

We can give you confidential information and advice on sexual health, contraception and signpost you to local support services.



**VISIT [OPENCLINIC.ORG.UK](https://openclinic.org.uk) FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SERVICES**

## OUR PROMISE TO YOU

- We will listen to your needs
- We will treat you with dignity and respect
- We will not judge you
- We will not discuss your personal matters with anyone but you, unless there is a risk of harm



# OTHER USEFUL SERVICES

## BROOK

National charity which offers information and advice for young people about sexual health and relationships.

[WWW.BROOK.ORG.UK](http://WWW.BROOK.ORG.UK)

## GRANGE PARK

A centre which provides support services for people in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire who have been sexually assaulted or raped.

[WWW.GRANGEPARK.ORG.UK](http://WWW.GRANGEPARK.ORG.UK) / 0330 223 0099

## THE GLADE

A centre which provides support services for people in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin who have been sexually assaulted or raped.

[WWW.THEGLADE.ORG.UK](http://WWW.THEGLADE.ORG.UK) / 0330 223 0099

## SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES

Sexual health services in Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. You can access STI testing, contraception, information/advice and more.

[WWW.OPENCLINIC.ORG.UK](http://WWW.OPENCLINIC.ORG.UK)

0808 178 0955 (STOKE-ON-TRENT, STAFFORDSHIRE, TELFORD)

0300 404 2996 (SHROPSHIRE)

## TERRENCE HIGGINS TRUST

The UK's leading HIV and sexual health charity.

[WWW.THT.ORG.UK](http://WWW.THT.ORG.UK) / 0808 802 1221

## BPAS

Abortion care, advice and support with clinics in Shropshire and Staffordshire.

[WWW.BPAS.ORG](http://WWW.BPAS.ORG) / 03457 30 40 30

## MSI CHOICES

Abortion care, advice and support with clinics in Staffordshire.

[WWW.MSICHOICES.ORG.UK](http://WWW.MSICHOICES.ORG.UK) / 0345 300 8090

## NUPAS

Abortion care, advice and support with clinics in Staffordshire.

[WWW.NUPAS.CO.UK](http://WWW.NUPAS.CO.UK) / 0333 004 6666

**BROUGHT TO YOU BY YOUR  
LOCAL NHS SEXUAL HEALTH TEAM**

OpenClinic<sup>®</sup>

For more information on any of our services,  
contact us on the details below.



**0808 178 0955**

*Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire  
and Telford & Wrekin*



**0300 404 2996**

*Shropshire*



**openclinic.org.uk**



**Open Clinic NHS**



**@openclinicnhs**



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**NHS**  
**inclusion**

OpenClinic sexual health services are provided by Inclusion, part of  
Midlands Partnership University Foundation NHS Trust.

Commissioned by local authorities. To find out more visit [www.inclusion.org](http://www.inclusion.org)