

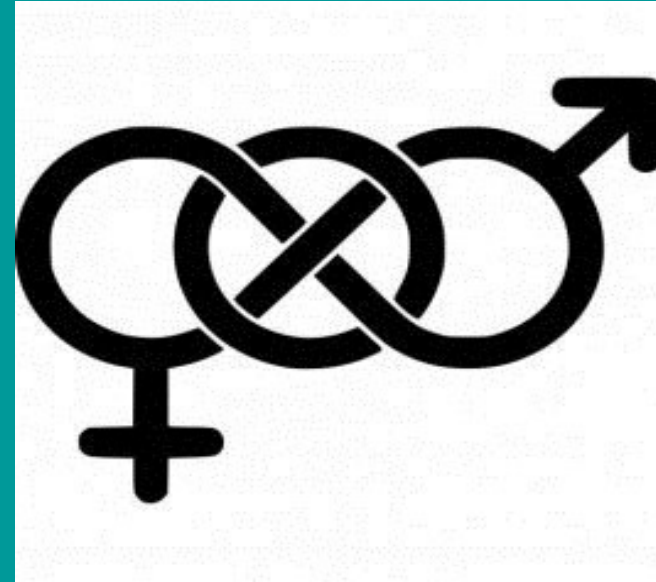
Useful contacts

National Sexual Health line

Tel: 0300 123 7123

Worth Talking About (for under-18s)

Tel: 0300 123 2930



Sexual Health Awareness





Most people are aware that unprotected sex can lead to unwanted pregnancies and/ or contracting a sexually transmitted infection. But even though we are aware of these things we do not always take steps to protect ourselves. The first thing to consider is whether or not you are ready to enter into a sexual relationship with someone. Being 16 and above the legal age of consent doesn't necessarily mean that you are. Remember the choice is yours and yours alone and we have to take responsibility for our own safety.

Things that affect our choices

Peer Pressure

Pressure from society

Media influence

Alcohol or other drug use

An inability to express ourselves properly

It is worth overcoming these obstacles though, as Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's) can have lasting effects ranging from discomfort, social isolation, infertility, or in serious cases possible death. Be aware that certain STI's, such as genital herpes can also be transferred via oral sex. If you do have had unprotected sex or have noticed a change in your body it is always advisable to visit a sexual health clinic to get yourself checked.

Examples of Sexually transmitted Infections

HIV

Chlamydia

Genital herpes

Genital warts

Gonorrhoea

Pubic lice

Syphilis

Thrush

HPV

If you want to fully protect yourself from STI's then using condoms is the only way and if someone refuses to use them, ask yourself if you really want to be intimate with them. If you are in a committed relationship with someone you trust, asking them to have a sexual health check-up before entering into a sexual relationship is also a good idea. Only then should you consider using a contraception purely against pregnancy.

These can include:

Caps or diaphragms

Combined pill

Contraceptive implant

Contraceptive injection

Contraceptive patch

Female condoms

IUD

Progestogen only pill

Vaginal ring

IUS

Talking about intimate issues can be challenging at any age but if you're not ready to have a conversation with someone regarding contraception you are not ready to have sexual relations with them. If you want to find out more including some of the symptoms of STI's then please take a look at the NHS website:

For further information, visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/livewell/sexualhealth>