

Sex and Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

All citizens of Allentown should stay home and minimize contact with others to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

But can you have sex?

Here are some tips for how to enjoy sex and to avoid spreading COVID-19. For the latest on COVID-19 information, visit [cdc.gov/covid19](https://www.cdc.gov/covid19).

1. Know how you get COVID-19.

- You can get COVID-19 from a person who has it.
 - o The virus can spread to people who are within about 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 when that person coughs or sneezes.
 - o The virus can spread through direct contact with their saliva or mucus.
- We still have a lot to learn about COVID-19 and sex.
 - o COVID-19 has been found in feces of people who are infected with the virus.
 - o COVID-19 has not yet been found in semen or vaginal fluid.
 - o We know that other coronaviruses do not efficiently transmit through sex.

2. Have sex with people already close to you.

- You are your safest sex partner. Masturbation will not spread COVID-19, especially if you wash your hands (and any sex toys) with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after sex.
- The next safest partner is someone you live with. Having close contact, including sex, with only a small circle of people helps prevent spreading COVID-19. Have sex **only** with consenting partners.
- You should avoid close contact — including sex — with anyone outside your household. If you do have sex with others, limit the amount of partners as much as possible.
- If you usually meet your sex partners online or make a living by having sex, consider taking a break from in-person dates. Video dates, facetime, sexting or chat rooms may be options for you.

3. Take care during sex.

- Kissing can easily pass COVID-19. Avoid kissing anyone who is not part of your small circle of close contacts.
- Rimming (mouth on anus) might spread COVID-19. Virus in feces may enter your mouth.
- Condoms and dental dams can reduce contact with saliva or feces, especially during oral or anal sex.
- Washing before and after sex is more important than ever.
 - o Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
 - o Wash sex toys with soap and warm water.
 - o Disinfect keyboards and touch screens that you share with others (for video chat, for watching pornography, etc).

4. Skip sex if you or your partner is not feeling well.

- If you or a partner may have COVID-19, avoid sex and especially kissing.
- If you start to feel unwell, you may be about to develop symptoms of COVID-19, which include fever, cough, sore throat or shortness of breath.
- If you or your partner has a medical condition that can lead to more severe COVID-19, you may also want to skip sex.
 - o Medical conditions include lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, cancer or a weakened immune system (for example, having unsuppressed HIV and a low CD4 count).

5. Prevent HIV, other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unplanned pregnancy.

- HIV: Condoms, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and having an undetectable viral load all help prevent HIV. Call your local health care provider, such as a primary care doctor or Novus ACS www.novusacs.com (610) 867-5365. Visit cdc.gov/hiv for more information. Or contact us at the Allentown Health Bureau (610) 437-7760 for more information.
- Other STIs: Condoms and dental dams help prevent other STIs. STIs can be transmitted through oral sex also, so using protection during every sex act is important. Visit cdc.gov/std for more information.

Condoms are available and free at the Allentown Health Bureau www.allentownpa.gov/Health-Bureau (610) 437-7760 245 N. 6th St, Allentown.

- Pregnancy: Make sure you have an effective form of birth control for the coming weeks. Contact your local health provider, such as a primary care doctor, Planned Parenthood (610) 439-1033 www.plannedparenthood.org , Casa Guadalupe Health Center www.nhclv.org (610) 841-8400, or the Allentown Women's Center (484) 821-0821 for more information www.allentownwomenscenter.com .
- LGBTQ resources: Bradbury Sullivan Community Center www.bradburysullivancenter.org contact jessica@bradburysullivancenter.org , Allentown Women's Center (484) 821-0821 www.allentownwomenscenter.com TRANS HEALTH hormone replacement therapy.
Novus ACS (610) 867-5365 www.novusacs.com