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Coronavirus 'SEX-PLAINED'

You might be wondering how coronavirus could affect your sex life, relationships and sexual health. Here, in this short guide we will provide you with advice, facts and top tips to keep you, your loved ones and your community safe.

Coronavirus SEX-PLAINED: Your Questions Answered

Can I get coronavirus from having sex?

Although coronavirus is not a sexually transmitted infection, it is a respiratory bug which means close contact does increase the risk. We do not yet know whether coronavirus can be found in semen and vaginal fluid.

If your sexual partner is part of the same household, sex should not be a problem; however, this only applies if both you and your partner are not displaying any [symptoms](#) of [coronavirus](#) or have not been in contact with coronavirus. Symptoms include a high temperature and/or a dry persistent cough. If either of you show symptoms of the virus, you must adhere to [social distancing advice](#) and isolate yourself in a different room, where possible, with no contact.

If you are with your regular partner and you are sure that they are not infected, please use some form of contraception to prevent unwanted pregnancy. You can now access our free and confidential services online for [contraceptive pills](#) and [condoms](#) via the website and have them posted to your home.

It is advised that you do not have sex with new people at this time. This also goes against government advice to stay at home. Experts have warned that some people who have the virus may not show any symptoms and could easily spread it to others. You could pass it to them, or they could pass it to you via close contact and kissing.

Can I get coronavirus from kissing?

Kissing can put a person at risk of coronavirus. Although the disease may not be spread through any means of sexual intimacy, it can be transmitted as a result of close contact. The disease can be spread through droplets of water and mucus from the nose and mouth as a result of coughing and sneezing: this means kissing also increases the risk!

If you have kissed or have been in contact with someone you think has gone on to develop coronavirus, be sure to self-isolate. If you're somebody who has developed symptoms, and you know that you've kissed people recently, you should let them know.

Can I still see my partner if we don't live together?

Couples who do not live together must practice [social distancing](#) and stay two metres away from other people. People should only be having sexual contact, including with their regular partner, if they live in the same household. The Government's directive advises people to only leave the house for items which are absolutely necessary such as groceries and medication.

If you are in need of free condoms or ordinarily collect condoms at a C-Card site, click [here](#).

Try not to worry - couples can engage in a number of activities together without physically seeing each other. With the help of technology, couples can watch movies together via streaming services and even maintain a sex life by participating in virtual fun. See below for some ideas.

I'm worried that I may have an STI. Where can I get a test?

You can [order an STI test kit](#) from our website, which will link you with our online service provider SH:24. The tests are free and confidential. You have to register, answer a few questions and the tests will arrive in discrete packaging for you to then carry out the test and post your samples back in a prepaid envelope. Your results will be texted to you.

How do I get an appointment? What clinics are currently open?

If you feel that you need an appointment please contact our booking and information line – 0800 328 3383. We will make you an appointment for a telephone consultation and provide you with the most appropriate information and support for your needs.

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the sexual health clinics that are currently seeing patients, for pre-booked appointments only following a telephone consultation, are at London Road Community Hospital, Derby and Wheatbridge, Chesterfield.

Help! I'm running out of contraception pills. How can I get some more?

There are several ways you can get your contraceptive pills. You can either [order the pills](#) from our website, which will link you to our online provider SH:24 or you can ring up our information and booking line on 0800 328 3383 and we can send you the prescription for the pills after a telephone consultation - provided you have had the pills with us previously. Alternatively, you may be able to contact your GP to order your repeat prescription.

Can I have new coil /implant fitted?

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and national guidance to protect our staff, patients and local communities, we are not currently carrying out routine coils and implant fittings.

We are issuing the free [contraceptive pills](#) and [free condoms by post](#) as alternative contraception choices. If you would like to talk to someone in sexual health, please contact our information and booking line on 0800 328 3383.

Help! My coil or implant is about to expire. What should I do?

At present, to reduce risk of coronavirus transmission, non-essential face-to-face contact with healthcare providers is being minimised where possible. Replacement procedures for long-acting reversible contraceptive (LARC) devices that have recently expired are deemed non-essential by the Faculty of Sexual & Reproductive Healthcare. They have offered the following guidelines to patients:

Coils with hormones

The coil 52mg LNG-IUS (Mirena/Levosert) can be extended for another year and arrangements should be made for the removal/replacement after the COVID-19 crisis is over.

Jaydess and Kyleena patients are advised to use condoms or add the Progestogen-only contraceptive pill at end of the license. To find out more about ordering the contraceptive pill online [visit our website](#) or order free condoms via post [here](#).

Coils without hormones

Women using copper IUDs licensed for 5 years can leave the LARC in place and arrangements should be made for the removal/replacement after the COVID-19 crisis is over.

Users of copper coils licensed for 10 years, can be left for 12 years.

Women can leave the LARC in place and also have a Progestogen-only [contraceptive pill](#) or [order free condoms](#) via our new postal service if they are worried, but risk of pregnancy is likely to be small.

Implants

Extended use of Nexplanon to 4 years use.

I need emergency contraception and I'm not sure where I can get it.

We now offer [emergency contraception](#) via post (for over 16 year olds). If you are under 16 years old or over 16 years old and wish to access sexual health services for emergency contraception, please contact us on 0800 328 3383 for support and advice. Please bear with us, as we are experiencing high volumes of calls at this time.

Alternatively for Emergency Contraception, please use the 'search' on our website for your nearest pharmacy in either Derbyshire or Derby City and we also advise that you contact the pharmacy directly, ahead of your visit to find out their current situation regarding opening times and access to services.

Can I get coronavirus by touching someone else's vagina or penis?

Zero contact between any partners that you're not living with is key. Essentially, any possibility of transfer of coronavirus - from your mouth to your hands, to genitals, to someone else's nose or mouth - increases the risk of passing on coronavirus.

I wasn't using condoms before coronavirus, should I start now?

This depends on your reasons for not using condoms previously. Using a condom consistently and correctly will help protect against sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancy. If you weren't using condoms because you were relying on something like the pull-out method - or you were taking chances with STIs - then it's even more important that you use condoms now. Remember, contact with anyone outside of your household is not allowed. You can now [order free condoms](#) by post via our website.

Anything I should know about coronavirus and masturbation?

Masturbation is the one fool proof thing you can do. The same hygiene rules apply: before and after, wash your hands along with any sex toys and your keyboard or touch screen.

How can I maintain a relationship at a time like this?

If you use your imagination a little bit there are lots of ways you can maintain a relationship without being face-to-face with your partner. For people who are dating and are isolating in different places, you may need some creativity. Zoom, Skype, FaceTime and Houseparty are all great apps used for audio and video calls one-to-one or with up to 100 people! They are great for staying in touch with partners or for staying in touch with family and friends, just be sure you follow the usual [online safety rules](#).

Below are some ideas that you may find useful to continue relationships at this time.

1. Get creative and think of activities you can do in tandem while on video chat – Netflix party anyone?
2. If you would normally plan a date around food or drink, why not do it virtually? Get a takeaway on speed dial or how about cooking up a special meal 'together'? Just be sure to sit at a table and talk when you're there. You know, like you would at a real restaurant!
3. Get to know your partner better on an emotional level during lockdown! Metro have done all of the thinking for you and put together 101 questions to ask [here](#).
4. Use video calling and do a workout together. Stretch out joints and muscles and get the blood pumping. Great for a boost of energy!
5. Remember, sexting is available to you but the rules still apply. Think before sending 'nudes' - once a photo is shared online, you have lost all control of it and it will be virtually impossible for you undo. Even if you change your mind and delete the photo you uploaded, other people may have already shared or copied the image. Sending or sharing indecent images of anyone who is under 18 – or keeping an image someone sends you – is a serious crime. This is the case even if the person sharing the image with you is happy to do so or you are happy to send nude selfies to someone else.