World AIDS Day 2020 – Tips for a happy and healthy sex life

This World AIDS Day 2020 (1 December), we are asking you one simple question: do you know how to have a happy and healthy sex life?

We want to spread the word that everyone has a right to pleasurable AND safer sex!

While protecting yourself and others from HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) is an important part of this, sexual wellbeing is also about so much more – it’s about being happy with yourself and in your sex life.

That’s why this World AIDS Day, we went out and asked young people for their tips and advice on the best ways to have a happy and healthy sex life. We’ve summarised our favourites and brought them here for you, under three key themes.

Know yourself – what you like, and what turns you on!

- Know that you have the right to great sex and let go of any shame or stigma around exploring what you want.
- Learn about sex on Avert.org – whether you’re having it for the first time, or if you just want some advice.
- Think about the type of sex you want to have, and who with.
- Masturbate – touch and play with yourself and learn about what feels good.
- Be in tune with yourself – maybe your desires will change?
- Know your limits – maybe you’re not ready for sex, maybe you only want to touch and make out, maybe you’re waiting for the right person or moment, and that’s OK!
Be in the know about HIV, STIs and pregnancy

- Search on Avert.org for that STI question you were wondering about.
- Talk to a health worker about long-acting contraception and other options that might work for you.
- Take your antiretroviral treatment as prescribed if you are living with HIV, so you can stay healthy and undetectable.
- Try a female condom for the first time.
- Learn about PrEP from a health worker or from Avert.org.
- Use condoms each and every time you have sex.
- Get a sexual health check-up! Test for HIV, STIs and talk to a health worker about your needs.

Talk, talk, talk!

- Let your partner know about what turns you on, and what they should be doing more of!
- Learn more about what consent means – how to give it and how to ask for it.
- Talk about STIs, HIV and pregnancy with your partner.
- Listen to your partner – let them tell you their sexual desires.
- Be honest with your partner about what your desires are, and what your limits are.
- Talk to your friends about any questions you have relating to sex.
- Talk ‘dirty’ as a way to turn each other on.
- Talk about your feelings with your partner.

What is World AIDS Day?

Every year on 1 December, the international community unites to observe World AIDS Day. This is a day to increase awareness and understanding of HIV, to galvanise the response to the epidemic and to remember those we have lost.

At the time of the launch of the first World AIDS Day in 1988, a person living with HIV had a very short life expectancy. But today, antiretroviral treatment means that people living with HIV can survive and thrive into old age.

This transformation is down to an unprecedented global response, thanks to grassroots activism, and the mobilisation of global resources and political commitment. You can explore the entire history of the HIV epidemic in our interactive timeline.

Follow our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for more World AIDS Day updates.

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