

COVID-19 (coronavirus) FAQs

Information for sexually active people

During the COVID-19 public health crisis, we highly encourage everyone to follow the stay-at-home and social distancing guidelines. However, if you are sexually active, here are some key points to keep in mind to avoid the spread of COVID-19:

1. Know how COVID-19 spreads

You can get the virus from a person who has it, even if they don't show any symptoms

- If you are less than 6 feet away from a person who coughs or sneezes, you could get the virus.
- The virus can spread through direct contact with another person's saliva or mucus.

We still have a lot to learn about COVID-19 and sex

- The virus has been found in feces of people who are infected with the virus.
- The virus has not been found in semen or vaginal fluid yet.
- We know that other coronaviruses do not efficiently transmit through sex.

2. Have sex with people closest to you

You are your safest sex partner

- Masturbation does not spread the virus, especially if you wash your hands for 20 seconds before and after sex.
- If you use any sex toys, be sure to follow the manufacturer's cleaning instructions or wash them with soap and water before and after every use.

The next safest partner is someone you live with

- Only have close contact, which includes sex, with a small circle of people to prevent the spread of the virus.

Avoid close contact, like sex, with anyone outside your household

- If you have sex with others, have as few partners as possible.
- If you find sexual partners online or make a living by having sex, consider taking a break from in-person dates. Video dates, sexting, or chat rooms are safer options for you.

3. Take care during sex

- Kissing can easily pass the virus. Avoid kissing anyone who is not part of your small circle of close contacts.
- Rimming (mouth on anus) could spread the virus if feces enter your mouth.
- Use condoms and dental dams to reduce contact with saliva or feces, especially during oral or anal sex.
- Make sure to wash up before and after sex.
- Clean and disinfect any sex toys, keyboards, and touch screens you use for video chats, watching pornography, or for anything else.

4. Skip sex if you or your partner(s) are not feeling well

- COVID-19 symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, and shortness of breath.
- If you or your partner(s) may have COVID-19, avoid contact, from kissing to sex.
- If you or your partner(s) have an underlying medical condition, this could put you at higher risk for COVID-19. These conditions include lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, and a weakened immune system (e.g., people with a low CD4 count or not on HIV treatment).

5. Prevent HIV, other STIs, and unplanned pregnancies

We are still offering the following services:



Condoms and lubricant



HIV testing (results in one minute)



STI screening and treatment



PrEP and PEP (daily medication to prevent HIV before or after exposure)



HIV medical care



Birth control



Emergency contraception



Pregnancy testing



In-person visits are still available for medically necessary appointments.

If you are interested in any of our services to prevent HIV, other STIs, and pregnancies, please call:

(888) 499-9303

For more information about COVID-19, visit

AltaMed.org/coronavirus