



Ask Sr. Ruth "Sexy Smarts"
www.sisterruth.co.za

October 2007

Meet Sr. Ruth:

I am a nurse that loves talking with young people about sexual health. I used to run clinic and many high school girls would pop in just to chat and ask questions. Asking questions and having them answered correctly is one of your sexual rights! I believe there is no such thing as a stupid question. When our questions about sex and sexuality are answered we can make our sexy choices – smart ones!

Need an answer? Send your question to

Q&A

Vaginal Discharge

I suffer from discharge and it is very embarrassing because it always is on my underwear. I just want to know if there is anything, I can do about it?

From puberty, the vagina and cervix produce moisture that keeps the vagina clean and healthy. Normal vaginal discharge is not smelly and may be clear, white or slightly yellow. If the discharge becomes excessive, smelly or itchy, see a healthcare provider.

Irregular periods

What would you suggest a person should do if they've skipped their period for 3 months and know they're not pregnant?

Irregular periods (skipping periods) are very common during the first years after starting them. It may take a number of years for women to settle into a regular cycle and some women never become regular. If periods go away suddenly, it could be linked to severe stress, body weight changes or excessive exercise. Sometimes doctors may prescribe a low-dose oral contraceptive pill to help regulate periods.

Breast Development

At what age are your boobs fully developed?

Why do breasts appear pointed during teenagehood and how long does it take for them to lose this appearance?

Breast development happens differently for each girl and we can't choose our boobs! Pimple Penny's and Watermelon Wendy's all start out with breast 'budding' (swelling behind the nipple). The breasts continue to enlarge and change in shape from 'pointed' to rounded. This is completed at about 18 years of age.

RUTH TRUTH

Simply the Breast!

October is Breast Cancer Awareness month (pink ribbon). Self breast examination is a good health habit. Do this after your period, as it is common for the breasts to be tender before. Stand in front of the mirror and look at the contours of the breasts. One may be slightly lower than the other, this is normal. Lie down and pressing gently with the middle three fingers, feel around the breast in circular movements, working from the outside in towards the nipple. Feel for unusual lumps. Practice makes perfect!

NB – Breast cancer is mainly found in older women, but the habit of doing your breast exam is best started when you are young.

“Fact or Fiction”: Heard something weird? Debunk myths! Acting on incorrect information is dangerous for your health!

If you have too much sex can you become infertile?

FICTION – Having sex does not affect fertility (ability to have a baby). This myth is linked to another myth that “men can run out of sperm”, which is also not true. Infertility has many causes and tests on both the male and female can identify the cause.

Is it true that when a man eats certain food that they get an erection e.g. man eating peanuts?

FICTION - The penis becomes hard or erect when blood flows into the genital parts of a man. This can happen very quickly in hot ‘sexy’ situations, but can also be caused by a full bladder or pressure of clothing. Erections are not caused by what a person eats.

“Cyber-clinic”: Medical questions about sexual and reproductive health
A lot of people use condoms AND the pill, how much more effective is this than just using the pill?

Using a reliable method of contraception for family planning, like the pill or injection is very important. It is also as important to protect yourself from sexually transmitted infections. The hormonal contraceptive methods *do not* prevent transmission of infections. Couples who are sexually active should use condoms AND a good contraceptive method. This is called ‘Dual Protection’ and is especially important in sexually active young adults where the reproductive organs are not fully mature.

“Wordz”:

What exactly is PMS?

PMS stands for Pre-Menstrual Syndrome and refers to a number of symptoms that women may experience just before their periods start. Some of these include bloated feelings, breast tenderness, constipation, irritability, depression or tearful outbursts, headaches, craving for specific foodstuffs e.g. chocolate! For most women these symptoms are minor and go away soon after the period starts. Supplements of Vitamin B6, Evening Primrose Oil and relaxation exercises may be helpful.

What is four play [foreplay]?

Foreplay refers to the sexually arousing behaviours that couples enjoy before sexual intercourse. It includes kissing, cuddling and caressing each other. Foreplay does not always have to lead to intercourse! Sexy touch can be enjoyed as shared pleasure without sexual penetration.

“Chick Chat”: What are girls saying to each other about sexuality and relationships? Be part of ‘chick chat’ by posting your response to our topic of the month.

“Talking about IT” with parents (September Chat)

Teens that have open communication with parents from a young age seem to be able to chat more easily about sexuality issues too. Some parents find it hard to start discussions about sexuality, even though they may want to! This is often because when they were growing up, these conversations were taboo.

Smart Move: Be the one to start the conversation! Use an article, (like this one!) or ask them to share their ‘teen’ stories, for example, “What kinds of things did teens do on dates when you were my age?”

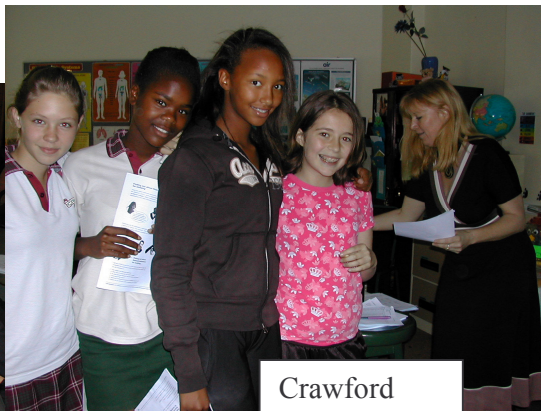
TOPIC OF THE MONTH (October)

“Abstinence Only” Sex Education: Some adults say that teenagers should be given limited sex education and be encouraged to ‘just say no’. What do you think? Does your school give sex education? Tell us about it – positives and negatives!

Sexuality
Workshops
by Sr. Ruth



Pretoria High
School for
Girls
Grade 9



Crawford
Prep School
– Grade 7
Sandton

“The Lighter Side of Sex”

6-year-old Wedding Wisdom

A six-year-old boy told his father he wanted to marry the little girl across the street. The father, being modern and well-schooled in handling children, hid his smile behind his hand. “That’s a serious step,” he said. “Have you thought it out completely?”

“Yes,” his young son answered. “We can spend one week in my room and the next in hers. It’s right across the street, so I can run home if I get scared of the dark...”

“How about transportation?”, the father asked.

“I have my wagon, and we both have our tricycles,” the boy replied. He had an answer to every question his father raised.

Finally, in exasperation, the father asked, “What about babies? When you’re married you’re liable to have babies, you know.”

“We’ve thought about that too,” replied the little boy. “We’re not going to have babies. Every time she lays an egg, I’m going to step on it!”

Send us your cute or funny quotes or stories

Quotable Quote:

“No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.”

Eleanor Roosevelt

Web Resources:

SA Sexual Health Association: www.sexualhealth.co.za

Fun Quizzes and Interviews: www.sexualityandu.ca Click on “Teens”

Words: www.urbandictionary.com

Sexual and Reproductive Health Services:

DISA Health Centre: 011-7871222 or visit www.safersex.co.za