



Ask Sr. Ruth “Sexy Smarts” October 2008

Sister Ruth is a nursing sister with over 10 years of experience working in the field of sexual health education. She teaches in schools, facilitates workshops for adults and writes about sexual health issues. Visit her website: www.sisterruth.co.za

**Feedback on our Topic of the Month: “First Moves and Hot Dates”
Your Wordz.....**

"I think most girls prefer having the guy make the first move, but I really think that now it is more acceptable for the girls to make the first move, and its helps the really nervous guy who is terrified of rejection out!! and it can be fun sometimes."

"I like dates that include alot of conversation, candles, music etc, and some people prefer something more active, like ice skating."

Sr. Ruth’s Wordz

Most girls still feel that the guys should initiate the date. Girls can show an interest in a potential partner by attending events where he is likely to be, initiating conversations and letting a mutual friend know you think ‘he’s hot’! Guys can build confidence in asking someone out by first getting a group of friends together for a fun, casual event – and include the potential partner in that group. Spend a little more time with her....then follow cues!

DATING “DO’s and DON’Ts”

Do’s	Don’ts
Relax and be yourself	Get too touchy too quickly
Be ready when you date arrives.	Dominate the conversation
Be courteous and polite – to the date and any family you meet	Douse yourself with fragrance – big turn-off / possible allergies
Plan some topics of conversation for those awkward silences	Talk about ex-boyfriends/ex-girlfriends
Keep the first date short – leave them wanting more not less!	Use crude language or jokes – leaves people uncomfortable

Hot Dating Ideas

Activity dates – Go to places where you can get for walks, rides, picnics e.g. zoo, amusement park, botanical gardens, dams, skating etc.

Movie dates – Follow a movie with coffee or a light meal. Discuss the movie and other common interests.

Tourist for a day – Take in a museum, art gallery or city bus ride. These are reasonably priced options and generate a lot of conversation.

Q&A – Visiting a Doctor

“When do I need to see a gynaecologist?”

“My mom always wants to go in with me when we go to the doctor. How can I change this?”

Women only need to go for a regular gynaecological examination if they are having vaginal intercourse. The medical professional will do a ‘Pap Smear’ – the vagina is examined and cells from the cervix (mouth of the womb) are placed on a slide and sent to a laboratory for evaluation. Early pre-cancerous changes can be picked up and treated. See *Cyber-clinic and HPV*. Other reasons to visit a doctor or gynaecologist include severe period problems including pain, irregularity, excessive bleeding or delayed onset of periods e.g. after 17 yrs. Itchy or smelly vaginal discharge should be investigated. Normal discharge changes through the cycle – from clear to creamy white, but it should not cause symptoms.

Teens should be allowed to see a doctor privately and discuss their health needs personally. Tell you parents that you feel more comfortable seeing the doctor alone – even if it’s just for ‘flu. The doctor is bound by patient confidentiality. If you are having some tests done, arrange to come in privately for the results. Remember that some tests will show on medical insurance forms.

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

“Is it true that the government ‘Choice’ condoms are safe to use? I heard they are not as safe as the ones you buy.”

All condoms that have the SABS quality stamp on them have been tested for prevention of pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infections. For safer sex, they must be used consistently and correctly with every single sexual act. Petroleum based lubricants e.g. Vaseline weaken latex and increase risk of condom breakage. Condoms must not be kept in hot, humid areas as these weaken latex as well. Water soluble lubricants are safe for use with condoms and are often labelled ‘personal lubricants’ e.g. KY Jelly.

‘Up to date’ – condoms are stamped with an expiry date. If the condom has expired, couples can do something sexy that does not include penetrative sexual activity e.g. sexy outer touch or mutual masturbation.

Imported condoms – these will also have a quality approved stamp and expiry date. Condoms marked ‘For Novelty Use Only’ are not quality tested for prevention of pregnancy and disease.

“Cyber-clinic”: Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) – Vaccination

Case Study: As a teenager, Jenny used alcohol and smoked but did not want to start having sex early. At 17 yrs old, giving in to pressure by an older boyfriend, she started having unprotected sex. After their break-up, she continued to have sex with her new partners. By the time she was 19 she had had 3 sexual partners. She had a Pap smear and was diagnosed with early pre-cancerous changes in the cervical cells. They used laser to treat the condition.

HPV – The Facts

- 80% of cervical cancers are linked to infection with Human Papilloma Virus, other strains of HPV cause genital warts
- Early sexual activity, smoking and unprotected sex are risk factors
- It is one of the most common viruses that are sexually transmitted – transmitted by intercourse or bare genital-to-genital ‘grinding’
- The majority of new infections are in 15 – 24 yr age group
- By age 50, 80% of women will have the virus, most with no symptoms
- The infection can spontaneously clear up in a number of cases but for many the result can be cancer of cervix.

Information on HPV Vaccination

- It is indicated for women from 14 – 26 years of age
- 3 vaccinations are given by a nurse or medical practitioner over 6 months
- It is 100% effective if given before a girl is exposed to the virus
- It costs about R 2 100 for the series of 3 injections
- Learn more at www.everything-i-can.co.za

“Hot Debates” – Have your say!

TOPIC OF THE MONTH: “MEDIA – Effects on Sexuality”

- How do you think sexy media and music videos etc. are influencing sexual development of young people and our sexual culture?
- How should teens deal with sexually explicit sms / cyber-bullying?

What are girls and guys saying to each other about sexuality and relationships? Air your views by posting your response to the topic of the month at www.sisterruth.co.za

Web Resources: For ALL of those ‘hard to ask’ questions!

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

Teen Sexuality: www.scarleteen.com

Sexual Information: www.siecus.org / www.sxetc.com

Sr. Ruth: www.sisterruth.co.za

Dr. Eve: www.dreve.co.za

Sexual and Reproductive Health Services:

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