

Men's Health

Introduction

First we are going to go into some male specific health concerns and then talk about STI's and male-specific family planning.

Prostate Health

What is the prostate?

The prostate is one of three male sex glands that is located in your reproductive system (Show diagram). The prostate produces some of the fluids that make up semen.

Some of the problems that can arise with the prostate:

- **BPH:** (aka benign prostate hyperplasia - or enlarged prostate) a non cancerous disorder and the most common health problem among men. Half of men between ages 50 and 60 will develop this and by the age of 80 as many as 90%.
 - Symptoms of BPH:
 - Frequent and urgent need to urinate- usually at night
 - Difficult urination
 - Inability to completely empty the bladder
 - "Leaking" after urination
 - Weak stream
 - What does prostate enlarging have to do with urination?
 - The prostate is located just below the bladder and surrounding the upper part of the urethra. As the prostate enlarges it presses against the urethra, narrowing the passage through which urine can pass and causing feelings of frequent and urgent need to go to the bathroom.
 - The symptoms of BPH are general and can also be caused by more serious conditions like prostate cancer.
 - It's important that if you are experiencing any of these symptoms on a regular basis that you go talk to your doctor.
- **Prostate Cancer**

- Prostate cancer is characterized by uncontrolled growth of cells in the prostate. Growth can be benign or malignant.
- Symptoms are similar to those of BPH, but usually there is more pain involved during both urination and ejaculation. Patients also experience pain in the lower back.
- Diagnosis is usually made through a digital prostate exam followed by a biopsy or blood test. If you are positive for cancer, doctors will want to take images to see whether it has spread to other parts of the body.
- Treated through radiation and chemotherapy.
- **The Prostate Exam:**
 - Prostate exams are not a fun activity, but they *are* an effective tool to measure the size of the prostate and to feel for abnormalities.
 - It's very important that you get one on a regular basis, especially if you are experiencing any of these symptoms or are above the age of 40.

Low Testosterone

- A decrease in natural levels of the male sex hormone. This happens naturally at a gradual rate after age 30.
- Testosterone is responsible for typical male characteristics, such as facial, pubic, and body hair as well as muscle. Testosterone also helps maintain sex drive, sperm production, and bone health.
- **Symptoms:**
 - **Short-term:**
 - A drop in sex drive
 - Difficulty maintaining an erection
 - Low sperm count
 - Enlarged breasts
 - **Long-term:**
 - Loss of body hair, muscle bulk, and strength
 - Gain in body fat
 - Emphasize that other less common, but more serious complications can occur
- **Causes:**
 - Testicular injury such as from trauma or infection.
 - Side effect of treatment for cancer.
 - Side effect from certain drugs like opiates.
 - Chronic diseases like Type 2 diabetes or AIDs.
 - Inherited genetic disorders (Klinefelter syndrome, hemochromatosis, Kallmann syndrome, etc).
- Diagnosis is made by your doctor through a physical exam and subsequent blood test. He may refer you to an endocrinologist.

- Treated through hormone replacement therapy with patches, injections, or tablets. You and your doctor will have to decide whether long-term hormone replacement therapy will be worth the risk associated with it, especially for prostate cancer.

Infertility

- The inability to cause pregnancy for a woman. Usually because of a low sperm count.
- You should seek medical advice if you and a partner having been trying to get pregnant for one year and have been unsuccessful.
- **Contributing factors:**
 - Similar to low testosterone
 - Also smoking and heavy drug use
 - Environmental toxins like lead and pesticides
 - See NYTimes article on influence of ubiquitous phthalates: <http://nyti.ms/1h2j9GT>
 - Overheated testicles from too tight clothing or hot water
- Diagnosed with a physical exam and semen sample
- Treated by surgery, medication, or hormone treatments
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STI's

- Condoms offer good protection, but only for areas of skin actually covered by the material. If you think you have been infected, seek medical care from a physician no matter whether you were using a condom or not.
- Two types of STIs. Those caused by viruses cannot be cured with antibiotics. Those caused by bacteria sometimes can be.
- If given antibiotics, it is important to take **all the medication as prescribed** and, if possible, to abstain from intercourse while being treated.
- **Myths and Facts about STIs:**
- Ask if the following are myths or facts:
 1. The best way to use a condom is to pull it on tight.
 - MYTH: The best way is to leave some space at the tip to catch the semen. If the condom has a reservoir tip, you can pull it on tighter.
 2. Using a latex condom correctly every time you have sexual intercourse is an effective way to prevent HIV infection.
 - TRUTH: After abstinence, this is the most effective protection against HIV infection.

3. Birth control pills used alone are effective in preventing sexually transmitted disease (STD).
 - MYTH: Birth control pills do not prevent STD.
4. When condoms are used correctly, they won't break easily and don't leak.
 - TRUTH: Condoms are inspected before being marketed and safety regulations require that condoms be able to hold a large amount of air without breaking. Condoms should not be exposed to heat or Vaseline, as both can cause the rubber to deteriorate, which increases chances of breaking.
5. Sharing needles to inject drugs is one way to get HIV.
 - TRUTH: Blood with HIV in it may be left in the needle and passed on to the next user.
6. STDs can be transmitted from pregnant women to their infants.
 - TRUTH: STDs can be transmitted from the mother to her infant before or during birth.
7. You can't get an STD from performing oral sex.
 - MYTH: STDs can be transmitted in a variety of fashions (orally and anally), not just through vaginal intercourse.

- **Note:** This is supplemental info for the teacher. If questions are asked about specific diseases, try to delay until end of lesson when leftover time can be assessed.
- **Viruses:** Herpes (1 and 2), HPV, Hepatitis B, and HIV
 - **Herpes**
 - can transmitted via skin to skin contact and via body fluids; can be transmitted even when asymptomatic
 - more mouth and face; (2): anogenital
 - can be passed on to infants
 - condoms significantly reduce transmission, though antiviral therapy + condoms offer the best protection
 - **HPV**
 - Spread via skin to skin contact
 - Condoms reduce spread (but not as efficiently as with HIV or chlamydia)
 - **Hep B**
 - Liver infection, no symptoms
 - People commonly vaccinated against this
 - Condom protection
 - **HIV**
 - Has few or no symptoms for up to 10 years after infection
 - Condoms offer very good protection

- **Bacteria:** Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, Syphilis
 - **Chlamydia**
 - Very common (5x more common than gono. and 30x more common than syph)
 - Usually asymptomatic
 - Spread via sexual contact, condoms offer good protection
 - **Gonorrhea**
 - Common, usually asymptomatic but if untreated can lead to infertility
 - Spread via sexual contact, condoms offer good protection
 - **Syphilis**
 - Generally asymptomatic or mild symptoms, but if untreated can result in >serious problems (e.g., neurological deficits)
 - Most contagious when sores present
- **Parasites:** pubic lice and scabies
 - **Pubic lice**
 - Spread via close contact
 - Symptoms: Itchiness and presence of nits in pubic hair
 - Condoms do NOT offer protection
 - Shaving is NOT a treatment for public lice
 - Should abstain from intercourse until topical treatment is complete
 - **Scabies**
 - A skin condition caused by a mite burrowed in the skin
 - Symptoms: Itchiness and a rash of small bumps on the penis, vagina, >anus, thighs, and breasts
 - Spread via close personal contact (can also be spread from clothes)
 - Condoms to NOT offer protection
 - Should abstain from intercourse until topical treatment is complete

Birth Control

- Ask the group, “Why might a couple not want to get pregnant at a certain point in their life?”
- Possible answers include:
 - Not ready to have (another) child
 - Want to focus on own goals before becoming a parent
 - Want to focus on taking care of the children they have now before having more
 - Want to have (another) child at the right time for themselves and/or their family

- Have more financial stability before having a child
- Acknowledge that everyone will have their own ideas about when they want to start a family or have more children and when they don't want to.
- Explain that understanding birth control is important for being able to choose if and when to have a child.
- **Methods that Work and Methods that Don't:**
 - Use a chalkboard, white board, or poster paper to make two lists. Title one as "Works" and the other as "Doesn't Work."
 - Ask class to list methods that they think work. Be sure to only write down those that actually do work. If the class suggests methods that don't work write them on the list of methods that don't work. After the lists are made, you will go through to explain important information about each method and add any missing methods.
 - In order of efficacy:
 1. Abstinence: Completely effective
 2. Outercourse (dry-humping), Vasectomy, Intrauterine Device (IUD) or Implant: < 1 in 100 will get pregnant
 3. Birth-control Injection, Ring, Patch, or Pill: 2-9 in 100
 4. Condom, Diaphragm, Pulling Out, or Sponge: 15-24 in 100
 5. Spermicide: ~25 in 100
 - **Note** - Almost all these methods are more effective when combined with each other.
 - **Note** - Condoms should only be used one-at-a-time. "Double bagging" does not confer extra protection and inherent extra friction increases the chances of a tear in the latex.
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- **Method Summaries:**

- **Outercourse** - Outercourse means different things to different people. For some people, outercourse is any sex play without vaginal intercourse. For others, it is sex play with no penetration at all — oral, anal, or vaginal.
- **Vasectomy** - Vasectomy is a form of birth control for men that is meant to be permanent. During vasectomy, a health care provider closes or blocks the tubes that carry sperm. When the tubes are closed, sperm cannot leave a man's body and cause pregnancy.
- **IUD** - IUDs are small, "T-shaped" devices made of flexible plastic. A health care provider inserts an IUD into a woman's uterus to prevent pregnancy.
- **Implant** - The birth control implant is a thin, flexible plastic implant about the size of a cardboard matchstick. It is inserted under the skin of a woman's upper arm. It protects against pregnancy for up to three years.

- **Injection** - The birth control shot is an injection of a hormone that prevents pregnancy. Each shot prevents pregnancy for three months.
- **Ring** - The vaginal ring is a small, flexible ring a woman inserts into her vagina once a month to prevent pregnancy. It is left in place for three weeks and taken out for the remaining week each month. The vaginal ring is commonly called NuvaRing, its brand name.
- **Patch** - The birth control patch is a thin, beige, plastic patch that sticks to the skin. It is used to prevent pregnancy. A new patch is placed on the skin once a week for three weeks in a row, followed by a patch-free week.
- **Birth-Control Pill** - Birth control pills are a kind of medication that women can take daily to prevent pregnancy. They are also sometimes called “the pill” or oral contraception.
- **Condom** - Condoms are worn on the penis during intercourse. They are made of thin latex or plastic that has been molded into the shape of a penis. Sometimes they are called rubbers, safes, or jimmies. They prevent pregnancy and reduce the risk of sexually transmitted diseases.
- **Diaphragm** - The diaphragm is a shallow, dome-shaped cup with a flexible rim. It is made of silicone. You insert it into the vagina. When it is in place, it covers the cervix.
- **Pulling-Out** - A man who uses withdrawal will pull his penis out of the vagina before ejaculation — the moment when semen spurts out of his penis. Withdrawal is also known as coitus interruptus and the pull out method.
- **Sponge** - The sponge is made of plastic foam and contains spermicide. It is soft, round, and about two inches in diameter. It has a nylon loop attached to the bottom for removal. It is inserted deep into the vagina before intercourse.
- **Spermicide** - Spermicide is a birth control method that contains chemicals that stop sperm from moving. Spermicides are available in different forms, including creams, film, foams, gels, and suppositories.
- **Morning-After Pill** - Emergency contraception is a safe and effective way to prevent pregnancy after unprotected intercourse. Pills are ~80% effective.