

Sexual Health **Fact** and **Fiction**

FACT- Condoms come in many different sizes.

Condoms come in a range of sizes. If the condoms you've used were too small or big, look out for different sizes or ask your pharmacist or a doctor or nurse at a sexual health clinic for more information. If you're not sure about the size, try one on alone before you have sex to see how it feels.

FICTION - If you're on the Pill you should take a break from it every year.

There is no reason to take a break from the contraceptive pill - it does not build up in your body and will not affect your fertility permanently. There are no known benefits to your health or fertility from taking a break. Please note that why you are protected from pregnancy when taking the pill, you are not protected against STIs and should still use a protective contraceptive.

FACT - If a condom breaks and you are not using another form of contraception as well, there are things you can do to stop getting pregnant

Emergency contraception can prevent pregnancy after unprotected sex, or if your contraception might have failed. There are two types - the emergency pill (the "morning-after pill") and the IUD (coil). You can take the emergency pill up to 72 hours after sex, but it's more effective the sooner you take it. Visit your GP, sexual health clinic or pharmacy

FICTION - If you're under 16 and talk to your doctor about contraception they have to tell your parents

Your doctor, nurse or pharmacist will not tell your parents or carers, as long as he or she believes that you fully understand the information they give you, and the decisions you are making. There are strict guidelines to support doctors and nurses working with young people.

FACT - You can catch herpes from oral sex.

There are two types of herpes virus, one of them (HSV-1) cause's cold sores on the mouth and the other type (HSV-2) causes genital herpes. It is possible though for HSV-1 to be transmitted to the genitals through oral sex, meaning that sexual contact with someone who has either of these types of the virus can lead to it being passed on

FICTION - If I have no symptoms I can't have a sexually transmitted infection.

Many people who have a sexually transmitted infection experience no symptoms whatsoever. Chlamydia is the most common sexually transmitted infection and 75% of women and 50% of men who have it do not show any symptoms. If left untreated, sexually transmitted infections can lead to serious long term problems such as infertility.

Make sure you get your information from reliable sources, such as the organisations we have signposted to the left of this noticeboard.