Smarter Sex

Whether you are single or in a relationship, most people would agree that February is known as the season of love. While abstinence is the 100% safest means of protection, for those who choose to be sexually active, there are some options to keep sex safer for you and your partner. Alcohol is one of the biggest factors on college campuses that lead toward unprotected and unhealthy sex practices. However, the path to smarter sex is easy! First, remember that consent can never be given while you or your partner are under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Being under the influence can often lead to poor decision making, such as having unprotected sex. Talking with your partner about your sexual history and building a relationship on consent and respect are marvelous ways to start a healthy sexual relationship. The next step is to use some form of protection when engaging in sexual activity (and there are many options!). In the end, just be sure to have fun, communicate with your partner and take care of yourself; if you do this, you will be on the right path toward SMART sex!

Not Ready For Sex

If you choose to abstain from sex, you are not alone! There are more people making that same decision than you realize. Whether it is because you don’t want to worry about STD’s or you just don’t have time in your life for that type of relationship, IT’S YOUR LIFE! You don’t need a reason or an explanation to give other than you are not ready for sex.

- Respect yourself and your choices
- Take time to get to know yourself and build your relationship
- Wait until you are ready and want to have sex

Is It Sex? Is It SAFE?

Think about the word SEX. What’s your definition of the word? Why does it even matter? The reason it matters is because if you don’t define the activity as “sex” then you may think you are safe from STDs. The truth is that the term sex can be used to describe multiple types of interactions, including oral sex and genital touching. If choosing to be sexually active, you need to take the right precautions to protect yourself, no matter what the activity! There are many condom options available to you, so be sure to find what best suits your needs. Don’t forget to learn the correct way to use each condom. When tested in the factory, condoms are 99% effective! The main reason that condoms sometimes fail is incorrect or inconsistent use, not the failure of the condom itself. Here are a few tips for safer sex:

- **Use a Water-based Lubricant:** Oil-based lubricants, such as hand creams, massage oils, and Vaseline, break down latex and cause condoms to leak or break.
- **Exchanging Bodily Fluids:** STDs are passed through bodily fluids entering through the vagina, penis, anus, mouth and any cut or open sore; reduce your risk by using protection.
- **Skin-to-Skin Contact:** Some STD’s can be passed by skin-to-skin contact, such as herpes and syphilis; condoms help to lower the risk but may not cover all of the infected areas.
- **Under the Influence:** Alcohol and drugs lower your judgment, making it harder to have safe sex. Alcohol also numbs the senses, making sexual contact less enjoyable.

**Question of the Month**

Where on campus can you get tested for HIV and STDs?

Email Diane at dodeh@fgcu.edu with the correct answer to enter into a drawing for $10 of Eagle Dollars!