



# next inSTALLment



a campus wellness letter

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Health Services

**Anyone can get an STD.** Despite all the warnings, students still think that sexually transmitted diseases happen only to other people. There's a lot of denial about the possibility of catching something serious. In order to reduce this risk, men should *always* wear a condom and women should use birth control regularly. Also barrier protection should be used for oral sex.

**You have to communicate your desires.** Telling a partner what really gets you going means taking responsibility for your full-blown sexuality. This is scary stuff, especially for inexperienced college students who still get drunk to dredge up the nerve to "do it" in the first place.

**Sex and alcohol make poor bedfellows.** One of the main reasons students "forget" to use condoms is that they're too high to care. Alcohol fogs reason and restraint - which also explains its role in forced sex. And let's not forget that alcohol messes with sexual performance in men and numbs sexual sensation in women.

**Sex is about relationships.** Sex doesn't happen in a vacuum. It occurs between two people in the context of a relationship, whether that relationship lasts two hours, two years or a lifetime.

**Everybody has different sexual needs.** Beyond all the sweeping generalizations about men, women and sex lies another deeper truth: We're all a little different. Our individual desires, preferences, fantasies and physical responses are complex, idiosyncratic, and maybe eccentric. We each have a sexual "fingerprint" that's unique and is constantly evolving over time.

**It takes skill to please a woman.** Women's bodies are a bit of a mystery - even to a lot of young women. Consider the fact that 40 percent of college women don't even pleasure themselves. If women are unfamiliar with their own bodies, it's no wonder inexperienced men often fall back on the most basic and banal of sexual techniques.

## A few things college students should know about... **SEX**

**Preventing pregnancy requires thought and effort.** Both men and women should consider their readiness for parenthood, too, and take responsibility for using an effective birth-control method in addition to a condom every single time they have intercourse.

**Men need to pace themselves.** Women seem to agree that men rush everything. They try to hustle their dates into bed too soon, and once there, they hurry to get down to the "real business" at hand: intercourse and orgasm. Across the board, women want men to slow down, both in and out of bed. They crave more romance, more old-fashioned one-on-one "dating," more conversation and, as one 21-year-old woman phrased it, "more foreplay, during-play and after-play."

**One student commented, "There are so many people who have slept with so many other people on campus that you never know what someone might have."**

**Sex has a big emotional impact.** No matter how cavalier students want to be about sex, there's no getting around the fact that when two people open their bodies to each other, they become vulnerable in unexpected and unimaginable ways. Our sexuality is tied inexorably to our emotional life. Women seem to know this instinctively, while some men prefer to think they won't feel any more of an emotional attachment to their sexual partners than they do to their school's football team. Yet, sexual involvement always triggers our fears, hopes, angers, yearnings...

**Choosing a partner shouldn't be a simple thing.** "A lot of guys have sex with whomever they can get into bed," says a 19-year-old female sophomore. "They don't think about whether they even like the person." The problem, suggests a male senior, is that guys use sex to measure self-worth. "But life is not a contest to see who can screw the most," he adds. And until they learn better, says a 20-year-old female junior, women often use sex to kick off what they hope will be a meaningful relationship, not realizing that a relationship is just about the last thing on the guy's mind.