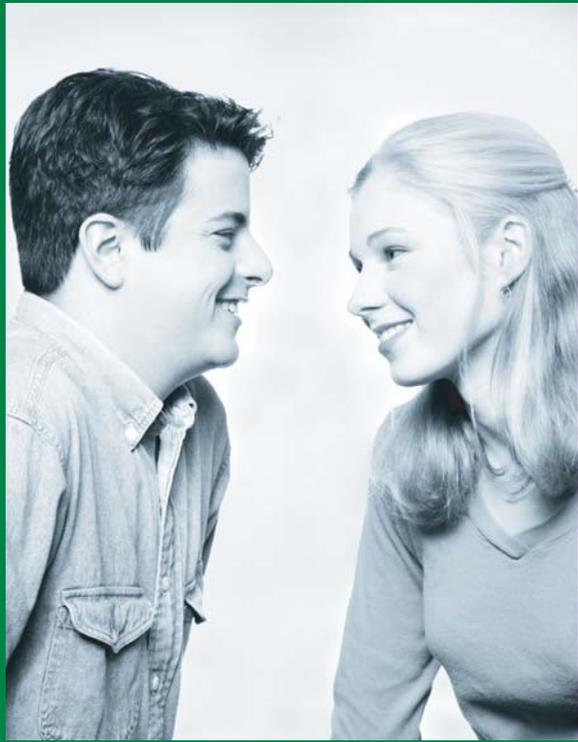


It can be hard to talk
about birth control,
but it is best when
you and your partner
make birth control
decisions together.



If you have questions

.....
If you have questions, call 1-800-545-1098 for
help or more information. You can talk to a nurse
or social worker in private to get the information
you need.



For help or more information,
call your local health department
or the **Info Connection** toll-free at
1-800-545-1098

.....
Talking
..... *with*
Your Partner
..... *about*
Birth Control
.....



Why you need to talk

Talking about birth control or preventing a disease such as AIDS is never easy. You may feel embarrassed. If you are having sex, using birth control is the only way to prevent pregnancy. And, using a latex condom during sex can help protect you from AIDS and other diseases you can get when you have sex.

Many people do not like to talk about birth control because they do not want to admit to themselves that they are having sex. If this is the case, you may not be ready for sex with your partner.

You may feel that using birth control may spoil your lovemaking. Instead, what many couples learn is that being protected from AIDS and unwanted pregnancy will help both of you to feel free to enjoy sex more.

It is best to talk with your partner about birth control before you have sex. If he does not want you to use birth control or does not want to use a condom (and you do), you need to talk more about why he feels this way before you have sex. You may need to wait and find out if you and your partner are truly ready to have sex. If your partner becomes angry or hurts you when you try to talk about using birth control, you need to think more about whether this relationship is right for you.

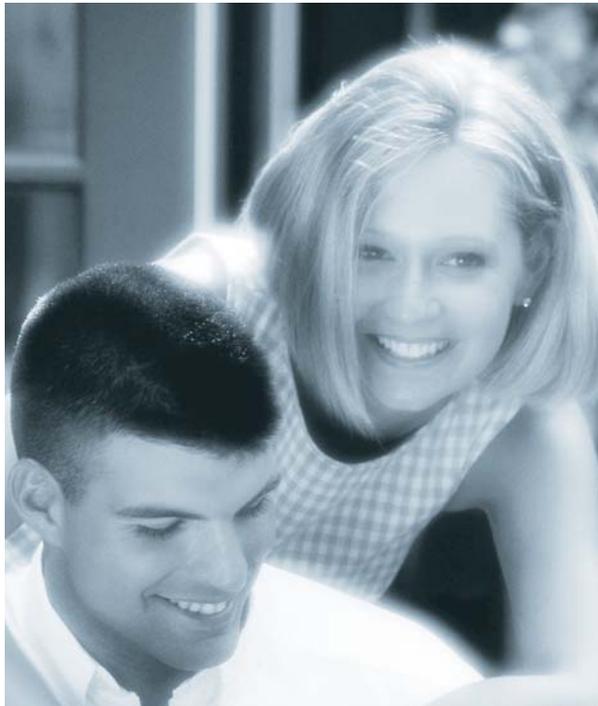
Before you talk

Decide if you want to be pregnant right away. If not, using birth control means you decide when having a baby is right for you.

Learn about all the birth control methods that interest you. There are many choices: the pill, Depo-Provera shots and condoms, among others.

Decide on the method that will work best for you. Talk to a nurse or doctor if you need to know more.

If you are worried about talking to your partner about birth control, ask a close friend or someone you trust how he or she handles talking about birth control. If you need to, practice what you want to say ahead of time.



When you talk

Plan what you want to say. Write it down or practice it if you need to.

Bring up the subject of birth control before you have sex. If you wait until you start to have sex, it may be hard to stop and talk about birth control.

Let your partner know that talking about birth control isn't easy. You can start by saying, "I know it's hard to talk about this, but we need to talk about using birth control (or a condom)."

Things to remember

- It is normal to feel embarrassed when you talk about sex or birth control.
- Take time to listen to your partner and let him or her know you understand how they feel. Be honest about your feelings. Ask questions to be sure you understand how your partner feels.
- Don't take any chances. Wait to have sex until you and your partner have made a birth control decision. Not using birth control even once can result in pregnancy.
- Talking about your fears and worries can help you feel closer to your partner. The decisions you make can improve your chances of not getting pregnant or of avoiding AIDS or other diseases you can get when you have sex.