

Sex

Having It, Not Having It, Hearing Other People Having It

WELCOME TO THE SEX CHAPTER!!!

Yes, it's getting hot in here. Sorry, but before turning the page, you need to consent. Do you promise to ask yourself and your partner the following questions before getting naked?

1. Did your partner say or clearly indicate YES?
2. Did you say or clearly indicate YES?
3. Is everyone who said or indicated YES sober?
4. If you say NO during sex, is your partner prepared to stop?
5. If your partner says NO during sex, are you prepared to stop?

If consent is unclear, don't have sex. YES means YES. Clear consent is about protecting you and your partner.

Sign here: _____

Dear Harlan,

I always told myself that I would wait to have sex, but last week, in the heat of the moment, I kind of lost my virginity and now I regret it. My problem is that he

still wants to see me, but I'm stuck on this guy who lives a floor below me and who I hooked up with once last month. We didn't talk much after that, but now I see him everywhere. He's always smiling at me. I really like him and want to start something more. What should I do to make him notice me again? Should I just forget about the guy I lost my virginity to? I need help.

—Extremely Confused

Dear Extremely Confused,

You can always have sex with the guy you now like—that will get him to notice you (for at least a minute). And NO—I'm not serious...

You "kind of" made a mistake losing your virginity, and now you kind of have to fix it. But before doing anything, figure out why it happened. Think about what you're using sex for. If it's to get a guy's attention, find a better technique. Slow down and be careful.

Now, regarding your situation—talk to the guy you slept with, just in case you and the sex actually meant something to him, and assure him that he didn't do anything wrong. Let him know that it just doesn't feel right to be a couple. As for the guy a floor below you, it seems that you already have his attention. Start with a conversation and keep your clothes on, so as to not get his attention using sex. You might not be a virgin anymore, but you can still "kind of" wait to have sex with another guy.

Another thing to keep in mind—be careful when using sex as a way to get attention. Things like bad

reputations, sexually transmitted infections, and children (that you'll give birth to) can end up following you around for years. And then, when you do find someone whom you want to date for more than a night, the past might become an issue.

Tip #65

Deciding to Do It

The Tip

Make sure the first time is with someone comfortable.

The Story

When I got to college, I was a virgin. I had dated, but never felt ready. I had kept my virginity. When I came to college, it was easier to have sex. People talked about it as if it wasn't a big deal. Hearing all the conversations made it matter less and less. I ended up losing it my freshman year to a guy that I was kind of dating. It wasn't great, but he made it comfortable. He was also a virgin. We talked a lot. He was surprisingly sensitive. The most important thing is to make sure that it's with someone comfortable. It wasn't physically all that great and it was much more comforting to be able to talk about everything. I could not have imagined doing it with some hookup from a party. I know a lot of friends who lost it to someone who they barely knew. That, I would have regretted.

—junior, University of Montana

Sex Fact

College students reported having the following number of sexual partners (for oral sex, vaginal, or anal intercourse) within the last 12 months: 34.1 percent of men and 31.6 percent of women report having NO sexual partners in the last 12 months.

—ACHA-NCHA-II Executive Summary Spring 2016

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If you've already done it, DO NOT skip this tip. In fact, I'm going to give back your virginity just for visiting this tip. Here. It's back. I can do that. It's part of being an advice columnist and author. So, for all you virgins and nonvirgins, it's safe to assume that some of you are planning on having sex in college. And a lot of you are planning on NOT having sex. Considering that roughly 80

percent of students graduating from college have done it, many of you who are planning not to do it might decide to do it in the future. Just in case you choose to, keep reading...

When deciding to have sex, keep the following virgin questionnaire in mind. If possible, copy this checklist and keep it close to you when making your decision. You have my permission to reproduce it and keep it in your pocket. If you don't have pockets, keep it in your sock. If you're not wearing socks, then stash it in your underwear. If you're not wearing underwear, then it's probably too late...

"My friend was a virgin for eighteen years and he said to her, 'You look like you listen to rock music,' and then she lost it."

—freshman,
University of Nevada-Las Vegas

○ Why do you want to have sex with this person?

- Can you discuss sex with this person?
- Are you able to offer and get clear consent while sober?
- What will happen after the sex?
- If you say NO or WAIT, will your partner listen and wait? (Practice this.)
- Are you single? Is your partner single?
- Do you have contraception (including condoms)?
- Have you asked your partner about herpes, genital warts, and other sexual souvenirs?
- Do you want to give this person something so special? (And no, you can't get it back once it's given. If anyone says that, that person is trying to get you in bed again.)
- Have you talked about what would happen if someone got pregnant?
- Are you doing it because you want to or because you're feeling pressure? (If you're afraid the sex won't be around tomorrow, it's not a good idea to have it today.)
- Are you sober? Is your partner sober?

- Are you afraid sex will ruin the relationship?
- Is this decision in alignment with your values and religion?
- Will it be awkward to see the person the next day?
- Is it happening in a comfortable place (not while your roommate sleeps)?
- Does it feel 100 percent right?
- Do you know the person's first and last name? Can you spell it? Can you pronounce it?

Besides the whole sexually transmitted infection thing and pregnancy scare factors, there is the emotional factor. Sex is intense and it can bring on a flood of emotions. Unless you're sure it's right, and unless you're with someone who makes you comfortable, it's not right.

Bottom Line

When in doubt, don't do it.

FYI: Some STDs/STIs can be transmitted even when a condom is used.

Tip #66

Deciding Not to Do It

The Tip

If you can't talk about sex with the person you're going to sleep with, then you obviously aren't mature enough to have it.

The Story

I met my boyfriend at college. We started going out about one week into school and seemed to be really compatible. We talked about everything, including sex. I told him that I didn't want

to ruin my chance at life by getting some disease or becoming pregnant, because honestly, I'm just too selfish right now to have a whole other human being depending on me. We talked it out, and still do, and he com-

"I'm not gonna lie, I really wanted to have sex. He had his pants down and asked me. We were more than friends, but not yet official. I got to thinking a little harder and decided it was a bad idea, since we weren't official. I told him no. It turns out that we never dated. I am so thankful that I did not lose my virginity to him."

—sophomore,
San Diego State University

pletely respects my decision. Talking about it even made him respect me more, and made him feel like I really trusted him and felt comfortable enough to share that sort of thing with him. If anything, talking about waiting has brought us closer together.

—freshman, Redlands College

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Consent Is a Simple Conversation

It's a conversation inviting someone to get it on that happens while sober. The person can answer YES or NO. Yes means you get it on. NO means you respectfully move on. If you can't handle NO, you are in NO position to have sex. For more info on consent, check out www.itsonus.org.

Sex is always available. Waiting is always a choice.

According to the National Institute of Virginitude (this isn't real), a virgin walks by you every 3.5 minutes. Actually, I made up that statistic and the Institute, but the point is that virgins are all around you. They're everywhere. It's just that not everyone flaunts it. A truthful stat reports that more and more teens are waiting longer to have sex.

Some wait for religious reasons. Some don't want to risk getting pregnant. Some aren't emotionally ready. Some just haven't found the right partner worthy of the honor. And then there are the reluctant virgins—those who want it, but can't get it. But really, if you want sex badly enough, you can find someone who is desperate enough, lonely enough, intoxicated enough, or affordable enough (not recommended). Choosing to have sex is easy. Waiting until it's right—that's the challenge. Virgins make a choice. It's not a curse—it's a gift.

If you're a virgin, hang on to it for a while. Whatever you do, avoid losing it by accident, while under the influence, due to pressure, or out of fear of losing someone. Never feel pressured to get rid of it. Make sure that when you confide in a partner that you're a virgin, you also make it clear that virgins can be sexual and sensual people. Being a virgin doesn't mean being a prude. It just means that you are extremely selective. Many virgin men and women have

confided in me—some people don't always want to date a virgin (clearly they don't understand that virgins can still be sexual). Still, there are a lot of people who find virginity extremely attractive. There are so many people who will be so excited to *not* make love to you, *not* have to worry about pregnancy scares, *not* have to worry about STDs/STIs, *not* have to deal with contraception, and *not* have to deal with all the emotions that go along with having sex!

And to you virgins who judge people who want to have sex with you—just stop. Some people want to be in a sexual relationship built on love, mutual respect, and trust before marriage. It's a personal choice, just like not having sex is a choice. Respect their choices and be sure to remind them that you're worth the wait. Also, make it clear that being a virgin doesn't mean that you're not sexual—in fact, you can explain what you'll do and won't do—that might pique their interest and clear up the confusion.

Bottom Line

Being a virgin doesn't mean you can't have sex. It means you choose NOT to have sex. And that's hot.

Tip #67

Doing It Way Too Much

The Tip

It's easy to have sex once you start. Pace yourself.

The Story

I started off as a virgin in college. It wasn't for religious reasons; I just didn't find the right person to be with. I lost my virginity the first month in college. Once it was gone, it

"It's just expected now; you go to a party, you hang out, and then something sexual will happen."

—senior, Alfred University

became so much easier to have sex. There wasn't the pressure of, "Wait, hold on, oh my god, I'm a virgin. Ahhhh." What happened to me next is the bad part. I kind of started being too promiscuous. I'd go out, party, and come home with some different partner. No, I never got an STI that I know of or anything like that, but I was with some people who I would have never been with normally. I lost control. It seemed like fun at the time, but I wish that I had, let's say, been more selective. It's hard when you see the people you slept with freshman year on campus like at the library or at a game. I'm not proud of the past.

—senior, University of Oklahoma

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If you've been trying to read this tip but keep getting distracted because you keep having sex (with someone or alone), then you're probably doing it too much.

"Losing your virginity doesn't have to mean losing high standards. Despite losing my virginity, I have yet to have sex with another person."

—freshman, Gonzaga University

For some students, sex is used as a way to escape reality; for others it's a way to feel connected. With no curfews,

no parents, and no one other than yourself to watch over you, the decision is yours to make.

Be aware—the most common problem with new students is that sex is sometimes used as a crutch to make it through the whole transition (this includes the use of online porn). Look at it like this—a new student on a new campus is naturally uncomfortable. One way to feel connected for ten minutes, or five minutes, or thirty seconds (depending who you're with) is to have sex. It's a quick fix, a fast connection, and a way to feel like you're not alone.

Doing It Way Too Much... Alone?

Porn addiction is real. If you're missing classes, avoiding real-life interactions, or are unable to have real sexual encounters—get help.

Fast sex (or random sex) is often just a temporary distraction from a bigger problem. It's an ego boost, it's a drug, it's an escape, it's a way to feel comfortable in an uncomfortable place. Beware: it can even be an addiction. The problem is that when the sex ends, you can end up hurt, pregnant, with an STD/STI, with a bad reputation, in a dangerous relationship, or confused—wondering if someone likes you for you or only for the sex and leaving you feeling even more uncomfortable and alone.

Besides using sex as a crutch, there's also the "he/she's too easy" phenomenon. This is when a guy or a girl has sex, enjoys the sex, but

"Just because a girl has sex doesn't mean that she's a slut."

—junior, Angelo State University

is then disappointed because the sex was so easily offered by his or

her partner. It's a post-coital loss of respect. In retrospect, the partner wishes the sex had been denied for longer. The longer the wait, the better the couple can get to know each other. The better they know each other, the more meaning

behind the sex. There's really nothing to be gained from having sex too soon (other than STDs/STIs and possibly children—see tips to follow). Want to get to know someone? Keep your pants on.

Be Prepared for a Sex Emergency

Consider carrying two condoms with you just in case one breaks or tears while it's being put on. Both men and women are equally responsible for preventing STIs and using contraceptives, and both should carry condoms.

—The BACCHUS Network

Having sex too soon is best described by using the analogy of building a new house—until the walls are up, the roof is shingled, the plumbing is in place, the electricity is flowing, and the carpets are installed, entering the house can be dangerous. Should you go into someone's "house" too soon or invite someone inside yours, always use a hard hat. You never know what you're getting into or who was there last.

Bottom Line

If you're having sex again while reading this tip, it's definitely way too much. Visit SAA-Recovery.org/ for info on sex addiction.

Tip #68

The One-Night Stand

The Tip

Make sure sex is consensual. "No" means no. That goes for the person saying it and the person being told it.

The Story

When a guy is getting into a random hookup, he needs to make sure it's consensual. I have a good female friend on another campus who was intoxicated and was with a guy who wasn't intoxicated. They had sex. She says that she never consented to it. She pressed charges because she thought that he took advantage. Guys are in a vulnerable position when engaging in a one-night stand. I'm extremely careful. I won't do anything with any woman unless she says it's all right. It's just not worth it.

—freshman, Earlham College

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The scene: It's a hot night. You're at a party. The music is playing. You've had a long week. Midterms were hell. You just broke up with your boyfriend/girlfriend. You've had a couple drinks. You're looking to relax and blow off some steam. You then find yourself kissing someone

"As a rule, we'll only stop our friends from taking someone back to their place if they're in a relationship or if the person is totally unattractive. Beer goggles can do that."

—senior,
University of Nevada–Las Vegas

you never imagined kissing. You think, *I've never done this before, it's college, I'm looking for some love, and someone to hook up with...* Things get intense. The heat is blazing. You can either end the night by getting his/her number, or you can just go home together and do it. What you do is up to you. It's one night—one night that can cause weeks, months, or years of aggravation and problems.

Reasons to avoid the one-night stands:

- Condoms are not always effective in protecting you

from the elements. It's hard to know where or with whom your partner has been. It's even harder to trust him or her to tell you the truth.

- Sex makes some people crazy—they have a one-night stand and then want to spend the rest of their life with you. Can you say stalker?

“Yes” Means Yes

California passed a new law that requires sexual partners to get clear consent while sober. This means anything other than clear consent can be interpreted as sexual assault.

- Someone might be in a relationship or living with someone who might not take kindly to you having sex with his or her partner.
- It's hard to know if you've gotten someone pregnant or gotten pregnant.
- It's uncomfortable to see your one-night stand around campus

days, weeks, months, and even years after the sex happens. People who have seen each other naked can never look at each other the same way again.

- If drugs or alcohol are involved, you don't know for sure if the sex is consensual.
- You might change your mind and your partner might not be willing to listen—this is when things get dangerous.
- It's confusing and fleeting, and can consume your time and energy the next morning, when you work through the drama following the walk of shame.

* * *

If a one-night stand happens (and it does happen for some people), be smart about it. Make sure it's what you want. Make sure both of you understand that it's a one-night

thing. Make sure that you use protection and that you ask your partner about his or her sexual history. Make sure you are alert, awake, and aware.

Bottom Line

You might be asking, "If the hookup sex happens during the day, is it still considered a one-night stand?" The answer is, technically, it's a one-day stand. But you can still call it a one-night stand to help others understand.

Tip #69

Pimps, Hos, and Reputations

The Tip

News travels fast, especially on a smaller campus.

The Story

When someone does something with someone, other people on campus will know about it. The smaller the campus, the faster the news travels. It can be as bad as high school. A guy will know if you're

a girl who sleeps around or doesn't sleep around.

What you do becomes public knowledge. I'm a

"Never sleep with more than one person in a fraternity or sorority. Everyone will know what you did."

—senior, Ohio State University

pretty good girl when it comes to what I do, but the one time I did hook up and went a little too far, I heard about it from people who barely knew either of us. Everyone loves to talk

about who did what with who. What you do will totally follow you around. On a bigger campus, that's not so true. It's easier to get lost in the crowd, but it's not true on a smaller college campus—not at all.

—junior, DePauw University

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Reputations are like bad gas—they can follow you for a very long time.

The smaller the campus, the more the reputation sticks to you. When it comes to what happens in the bedroom (or at the library, or in the laundry room, or wherever you find yourself in an intimate moment), news travels fast. People talk. They talk a lot. And now, with Facebook, texting,

Twitter, Tumblr, Snapchat, and sexting, news travels even faster. You might as well put the story of your affair in the campus newspaper (no explicit photos, please).

You might not realize it, but when you sleep with someone, there's a good chance other people will find out (especially if you are in someone's room while that person's roommate is sleeping). When you sleep with someone and then sleep with their friend, there's an even better chance that someone

will find out (especially if you're sleeping with them both at the same time and in the same bed). If you sleep with someone and then sleep with their friend and then sleep

Sex Fact

College students reported having the following number of sexual partners (for oral sex, vaginal, or anal intercourse) within the last 12 months: 11.5 percent of men and 8.2 percent of females report having 4 or more sexual partners.

—ACHA-NCHA-II Executive Summary Spring 2016

with two more of their friends, everyone will know. Then you will either be known as easy, a manwhore, a manbo, or some other expression that isn't all that endearing. And then, when you do find yourself wanting to have a serious relationship, the person whom you want to take you seriously won't. And even if he or she does want to be with you, the fact that you've slept with his or her friends makes it close to impossible. It takes years to change reputations. Be careful making them.

Should you make a habit of sleeping around, bring a change of clothes with you so that you don't have to take your walk of shame in your evening wear. There's nothing more obvious than a woman in a miniskirt and sequined top or guy with black pants and leather shoes walking the streets at nine in the morning on an eighty-degree day.

Bottom Line

Quick note: it's hard to deny sleeping around if you've slept with most of the people on campus.

Second Sexting Warning

40 percent of teens and young adults say they have had a sexually suggestive message (originally meant to be private) shown to them, and 20 percent say they have shared such a message with someone other than the person for whom it was originally meant.

—National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy

Tip #70

Sexual Souvenirs

*Note: STDs and STIs are the same thing.

*Second Note: Listen to "The Chlamydia Jive" and "The Syphilis Song" at www.HarlanCohen.com/NakedRoommateGoodies.

The Tip

Herpes isn't an end-all. We all have baggage.

The Story

My friend and I decided to hook up when I was visiting him. We discussed our status and our last time being checked for STIs. Two weeks later, I got symptoms I immediately recognized as herpes. A trip to the doctor and a culture told me what I already knew. I called my mother and told her the news, holding back tears. Funny enough,

"Girls should definitely get a Pap smear every single year, whether you are 'sexually active' or not. I had very little and non-risky sexual contact and ended up getting HPV on spring break, which I would not want anyone to have to go through."

—sophomore, Miami University (Ohio)

it turned out both she AND my aunt have it. I contacted my friend from before, and at first he thought I put HIM at risk. Turns out he did not know that the cold sores on his mouth were herpes and transmissible genitally. He gave it to me when he gave me oral sex. The first few months I was very afraid to date or hook up. The word "herpes" was frightening, but I decided to say it until it wasn't anymore. I tell anyone and everyone that I have herpes if the conversation goes that way. It's baggage, but it's only a small

addition to my closet of issues and flaws I've accumulated. And that closet is just part of the house that is me—which I believe is full of so many wonderful things that make me worth dating! Funny enough, when I did have to relay the news to a crush, I was

more worried that he DIDN'T care. We've been dating over six months, and it's been a year since I contracted

"My roommate freshman year caught pubic lice from the bathroom toilet. She wasn't sexually active and realized what had happened after a red and raw rash broke out."

—senior, Manhattan College

herpes. I've remained outspoken about it and it's brought only good to my life. Every time I tell my story, I meet another person who contracted either herpes or another STI, and they always are grateful to meet someone else who has it. When we don't talk about it, it remains this stigma that it only happens to dirty, gross people. But it can happen to anyone having sex—of any kind!

—senior, University of Kentucky

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Some people come home with a souvenir shot glass from college. Some people come home with a T-shirt bearing a school mascot. Some people come home with herpes, genital

"One of the girls I know just got genital warts. She was sleeping with this kid who was pretty active. She was scared to confront him. She didn't want to accuse him, but she wanted to inform him in case he didn't know so he wouldn't give it to someone else."

**—junior,
Western New England University**

warts, and chlamydia.

If your hobby is collecting STIs (also referred to as STDs or sexually transmitted diseases), college is THE PLACE to do your collecting. The challenge—you

don't always know who has them and who doesn't have them. People don't wear signs or T-shirts saying, "Hi, I've Got Herpes." (Visit my

"It's been two years since I found out I contracted genital herpes. At first, it made me feel worthless, like what did I do to deserve this? After turning to alcohol to try and cope and waking up in a hospital room from drinking too much, I decided to talk to the counselor at school. It was very difficult to speak about it...Through counseling I realized I wasn't a bad person. And that it was much more common than I thought. Just because I have herpes doesn't mean I won't be loved. Since being diagnosed and reaching out for help, I've had a sexually active relationship. The herpes made me more cautious about who I share myself with...I don't see that as a bad thing."

—senior, Southern Vermont College

website to get your sex souvenir T-shirt.) The STI truth is that—brace yourself—one in five college-age people have at least one (and some say the percentages are even higher).

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in the United States, one of every six teenagers and adults is infected with genital herpes.

Women are more commonly infected than men, and it is estimated that one of every four women has herpes. Health experts estimate that there are more cases of genital HPV infection than of any other STI in the United States.

Chlamydia is the most common bacterial

STI. It's known as a

"silent" disease because

the majority of infected

people have no symptoms (this is why it's so important for sexually active women to get annual or semi-annual checkups).

Beyond the whole physical side of STIs, there's the emotional part of it. With many of these STIs, once you get

"We had a chlamydia outbreak on our campus. My best friend had a genital warts outbreak on her campus."

—junior, small campus in Indiana

them, they stay with you for the rest of your life, and they change your life. You have to tell your future partners. As for how you get these things, while condoms are effective, they don't always protect you. So, if you plan on rubbing yourself against someone else, cover up and be sure to get their sexual history.

Should you suspect that you have a sexual souvenir, get tested quickly. Many STIs can be detected with relatively little discomfort. A little urine or blood, or a few cells can do the trick. Should you test positive, there is treatment available to eliminate or help control outbreaks. If you are positive for an STI, consider getting professional support if you experience feelings of shame and humiliation. I can promise you that you will still be desirable and loved. Millions of people live healthy and loving lives with sexual souvenirs. While STIs like HPV and herpes can't be cured, they can be managed.

Another huge problem is that some STIs do not show symptoms or do not show up in tests. Unless a man shows

HPV Fast Facts

- Genital HPV is spread through skin-to-skin contact.
- Genital HPV cannot be entirely prevented by condom use.
- This virus is often asymptomatic—people usually do not know they have it.
- At least 50 percent of sexually active men and women acquire genital HPV at some point in their lives.
- HPV can be contracted from one partner, remain dormant, and then later be unknowingly transmitted to another sexual partner, including a spouse.
- Some types of HPV cause cervical cancer.
- Although smoking does not cause HPV, it increases the risk of getting an HPV infection by three times because the body is less able to fight the infection.

—BACCHUS Sexual
Responsibility Week

symptoms of HPV, it's not possible to know if he has it. Chlamydia can have no symptoms in 50 to 75 percent of cases, although it can show up in tests. If gone untreated, it can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease, which can lead to sterility. Herpes is another one that is hard to see—especially during viral shedding prior to an outbreak. Some people will go years without knowing they have herpes. As for HPV, college-age people are the most at-risk group, especially women. So if you are sexually active, get tested and screened at your campus health center at least once a year. You might also want to look into the HPV vaccine (HPV can be a precursor to cervical cancer). Most campuses offer testing (including Pap smears—for women, not men) that are low-cost (a great holiday gift). If your health center doesn't have screening on campus, the staff can direct you to another center off campus. There are home kits available to test for HIV, herpes, HPV, chlamydia, gonorrhea, trichomoniasis, and hepatitis.

The following is a list of sexually transmitted infections available on your college campus (and yes, quantities are unlimited). Should you find yourself with a sore, an itch, or a bump that can't be explained, the following can help point you in the right direction—the direction of the health center.

A Guide to the Most Common STIs You Might Meet in College

Source: www.CDC.gov

Genital Herpes

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one of every six teenagers and adults in the United States is infected with genital herpes. Women are more commonly infected than men, and it is estimated that one in every four women has herpes. The incurable viral herpes infections are caused by herpes simplex virus (HSV).

The major symptoms of herpes infection are painful blisters or open sores in the genital area. These may be preceded by a tingling or burning sensation in the legs, buttocks, or genital region. The herpes sores usually disappear within two to three weeks, but the virus remains in the body for life and the lesions may recur from time to time. Severe or frequently recurrent genital herpes is treated with one of several antiviral drugs that are available by prescription. These drugs help control the symptoms but do not eliminate the herpes virus from the body. Suppressing antiviral therapy can be used to prevent occurrences and perhaps transmission. Women who have genital herpes during pregnancy can transmit the virus to their babies. Untreated HSV infection in newborns can result in mental retardation and death. It is possible that a person may not experience a “first episode” until years after the infection is acquired. Condoms can help prevent infection, but can’t eliminate the risk. Once infected, the virus is always present.