

# SEX AND COVID-19

The isolation brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic has not been easy, and we've all had to balance protecting our physical safety with fulfilling our wants and needs.

This is a guide for how to maximize your sexual engagement, if desired, while reducing your risk of contracting COVID-19.

## WHAT WE KNOW:

- While the novel coronavirus has been detected in fecal matter and semen, it is unclear if it can be transmitted directly through vaginal, anal, or oral sex
- Close physical contact with an infected person may spread COVID-19
- Sexual activity may put partners in contact with each other's saliva, respiratory droplets (from coughing or sneezing), or aerosolized viral particles (from talking or breathing)
- The virus can also live on surfaces and may be spread when a person touches the surface and then their face



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## THE SAFEST SEX RIGHT NOW IS SOLO SEX

Masturbation is safe, especially if you wash your hands and any toys used with soap and water for 20 seconds before and after.

## THE SAFEST PARTNERS ARE PEOPLE WHO LIVE WITH YOU

Engaging in sexual activity with people in your home or those in your "pod" is the next safest option to solo sex, provided that your partner(s) also take steps to reduce potential exposure (physical distancing, hand washing, wearing a mask in public).

The best way to prevent COVID-19 infection is to avoid physical contact, including sex, with people who don't live with you or are outside of your "pod."



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**If you choose to engage in sexual activity with other people, here are some safety tips:**

- If one of you feels unwell, avoid kissing and skip sex
- Reduce your number of sex partners
- Choose people you trust to communicate honestly about risks, boundaries, and safety planning
- Discuss risk (including assessing risk factors such as underlying conditions and immune system status)
- Use barrier methods to reduce contact with fluids that could spread COVID-19 and STIs
- Wash your hands and body with soap and water before and after
- Create a plan for if you get sick
  - How would you safely isolate from others while accessing food, medicine, etc.?
  - How would you access healthcare?

**Other safer options include:**

- Sexual activity that avoids close face-to-face contact and kissing
- Mutual masturbation while physically distanced
- Virtual sex



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Remember: always get consent before any sexual activity. If your partner doesn't want to have sex for any reason—including being concerned about COVID-19—it's important to respect that.



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