

## Safer Sex during COVID-19

Consensual sex can be a way of dealing with anxiety or fulfilling and expressing our needs for intimacy. A safe and pleasurable sex life is an important part of mental health and wellbeing. **But is it safe to have sex during COVID-19?**

### Can I get COVID-19 from having sex?

Safer sexual practices may prevent unintended pregnancy and [sexually transmitted infections](#) (STIs), but it will not prevent infection from COVID-19. COVID-19 [spreads](#) through direct contact with respiratory droplets (spit) of someone who is infected with the virus when they cough, sneeze or talk. These droplets can spread up to two metres or six feet. The virus has also been found in semen (cum) and feces (poop). It is not yet known if the virus can be found in blood or vaginal fluids. It may also be possible for a person to get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes.

### How to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and still enjoy sex

- Your safest sex partner during the COVID-19 pandemic is yourself. Solo sex, also known as masturbation, does not spread COVID-19.
- Consider consensual sexting, virtual sex, video dating, or chat rooms.
- Only have sex with consensual partner(s) that are part of your [social circle](#).
- If you usually meet sex partners online, are polyamorous with people who are not living in the same house or are part of your social circle, or make a living having sex, consider video dates, sexting or chat rooms instead of meeting people in person.

### Protect yourself and your partners when having sex

- Skip having sex if you or your partner are feeling unwell, have symptoms of COVID-19 or if either of you have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19.
- Consider downloading Health Canada's [COVID Alert](#) app so you can be notified directly if you have been in close contact with someone who was contagious with COVID-19.
- Wash your hands before and after having sex, whether alone or with a partner.
- Be creative and find ways to include using masks during sex, especially with a partner you do not live with.
- Avoid or limit kissing and saliva exchange and do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Consider sexual positions that avoid being face-to-face.
- During oral or anal sex, use condoms, gloves or other barriers to reduce contact with saliva and other fluids.
- Use condoms to protect yourself from STIs.
- Clean sex toys and consider covering them with a condom. Do not share sex toys with others.

- Avoid having sex if one partner has a health condition that can lead to more severe illness from COVID-19.

**Prevent unplanned pregnancy**

Continue to use your regular birth control methods to avoid unintended pregnancy. Several [Sexual Health Clinics](#) in Toronto can assist with prescriptions for birth control. Contact the clinic before visiting, as service hours may have changed.

If you are unable to access your usual birth control methods, consider condoms and lubricant, and, as needed, emergency contraceptive pills, which are available at stores without a prescription.

Abortion clinics remain open in Toronto, but pre-procedure counselling may need to be done over the telephone before the appointment. Many clinics are not allowing support people to come to appointments during this time. For abortion services visit: [choiceconnect.ca](http://choiceconnect.ca).

**More information**

Visit our website at [toronto.ca/COVID19](http://toronto.ca/COVID19) or call us at 416-338-7600 for more information.