

Tips for Talking with Your Partner



Even though a lot of people have sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), talking about them can be tough. Whether you want to ask a partner about getting tested, or tell someone about having an STD, you might feel scared or embarrassed. But you can't let embarrassment be a health risk — for you or your partner.

If you're feeling nervous, here are some ways to help start the conversation:

- + Think about all the reasons why you want to talk about STDs with your partner.
- + Practice having the discussion you want to have with your partner. What do you want to say? What are all the possible things your partner could say?
- + Try to have this talk when you both have time and privacy.
- + Remember that your partner cannot read your thoughts. It's important to talk about what you want and how you feel. It's important to listen to your partner, too.
- + If you are feeling nervous or embarrassed, tell your partner. Maybe your partner feels the same way you do. Sometimes sex is hard to talk about, and it's okay to admit that.
- + Ask how your partner feels about this conversation. Being honest with each other can make a relationship more fulfilling.
- + Tell your partner about any STD tests you may have had in the past. Ask about your partner's history of testing and infections.
- + Offer to go for testing together.

Remember, if you have taken risks with unprotected sex or sharing needles, getting tested is vital.

For more tips and resources, visit www.plannedparenthood.org.