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## Having sex – contraception and STIs

Before having sex there are some things you should think about first:

- Are we both old enough to have sex? Remember you both need to be 16 years old to legally have sex.
- Does the other person want to have sex with me? Having the other person's permission is very important. You should always have someone's consent before having sex.

Remember that having sex is a big responsibility. You also need to consider:

- How will I protect myself against Sexually Transmitted Infections - known as STIs.
- How will I prevent us getting pregnant?

## Sexually transmitted infections

There are lots of things that you can catch from having sex. Sexually transmitted infections are passed on when you have sex. The infection can affect both the men and women and are usually some sort of infections of the genitals. There are lots of infections - some have symptoms, others don't, so it is not always possible to know if you have a sexually transmitted infection.

Most STIs can be easily diagnosed when you see a doctor and most can be treated with antibiotics, lotions or other medication. Some STI's can be got rid of quickly, other STIs may come and go throughout your life once you've been infected.

There are some very serious infections you can get from having sex too. HIV is something you hear a lot about. It is a virus that causes AIDS which is life threatening if it isn't treated. Luckily, in the western world, HIV can be treated, but you have to take a lot of medication.

## Protecting yourself from STIs and pregnancy

Thankfully, there is a very easy way of reducing your chances of getting an STI. Using a condom will prevent the man passing anything onto their partner (man or woman) and will also prevent the woman passing anything onto the man.

Condoms also reduce your chances of getting pregnant. Using condoms with a spermicide will also help prevent pregnancy. There



are lots of other types of contraception to stop you getting pregnant - you might have heard people talking about using the contraceptive pill. You can talk to your GP (your local family doctor) about what is best for you.

There is much more about pregnancy and STIs at:  
[www.teenagehelathfreak.co.uk](http://www.teenagehelathfreak.co.uk)  
Or call Sexwise on: 0800 282930



[aboutbraininjury.org.uk](http://aboutbraininjury.org.uk)