



# HYGIENE

*and Safe Sex*



Generalitat de Catalunya  
**Departament  
de Salut**

## *Intimate hygiene*

- You only need to wash the external part of the genitals (pubis). The best way is to use water and dry yourself well with a towel. You can use an intimate soap if it makes you feel better.
- Avoid all forms of internal vaginal washing (douche, irrigation, etc) as this reduces your natural defences against infections.
- Never use iodine solutions of any kind (for example, Betadine®), as they can cause itching and allergic reactions.

## *What can I use to wash my mouth after oral sex?*

- Use water with 3 to 5 drops of hydrogen peroxide. Do not use mouthwashes, as they irritate the mouth and do not prevent infection.
- Do not brush your teeth before or after oral sex, as this could cause small wounds, which can allow infections to enter your body.

**Always use a condom for sex, including oral sex.**

## *Lubricants*

- You can use a lubricant for all sexual relations with penetration.
- Always use a water-soluble lubricant (such as glycerin) or a silicon-based lubricant.
- Never use an oil-based lubricant (baby oil, body lotion, beauty cream, Vaseline), as these can cause the condom to break.

**Always use a water-soluble lubricant in penetrative sex to prevent the condom from breaking.**

## *Are lubricants and spermicides bad for the mouth or throat?*

- Lubricants have no harmful effects.
- Spermicides may cause irritation, rashes and itching in some people.

**Saliva is a natural lubricant.**

## *What can I do if I have itching or irritation?*

- **See a doctor if:**
  - you are not better in 2 or 3 days;
  - the irritation is accompanied by heavy discharge that is yellow or smells bad.
  - If you notice any cuts in your skin.
- **Remember:**
  - do not use toilet paper to dry yourself;
  - wash with water and dry yourself with a towel;
  - always wear cotton underwear if possible.
- To prevent irritation, use a little water-soluble lubricant with the condom.

**Do not use vaginal ovules or antibiotics without first consulting a doctor.**

## *Can I use vaginal sponges when I have my period?*

- This is not recommended, as it increases the risk of infection inside the vagina.
- If, despite this, you decide to use vaginal sponges, they should be antiseptic, without spermicide, and you should change them every time after you have sex.
- Even if you use a sponge, don't forget to use a condom (male or female) too.



## *What can I do to avoid becoming pregnant?*

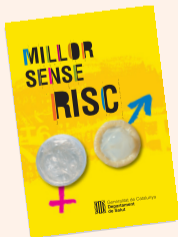
- The condom (male or female) is the only contraceptive method that protects you against sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs) and the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) whilst also preventing unwanted pregnancy.
- No other method protects against sexually-transmitted diseases or the HIV virus.
- The IUD (intra-uterine contraceptive device) is not recommended for sex workers. Using an IUD increases the risk of complications if you contract an STD.
- If you want to use a double contraceptive method, the best option is a combination of the condom and another method as recommended by your gynaecologist.



## *What should I do if the condom breaks?*

- Go to a health centre within 72 hours. You can ask for the “morning-after pill” (emergency contraceptive) to prevent pregnancy, and for HIV prevention treatment.
- If the condom breaks, this may cause infectious diseases. It is important that you should take the necessary tests to discard this possibility.
- Antiseptic soaps do not protect against infection or pregnancy.

**You should be vaccinated  
against hepatitis A and B.  
Go to a health centre for this.**



## *How can I terminate a pregnancy?*

- First take a pregnancy test to confirm that you are pregnant.
- Pregnancies should always be terminated under medical control. No natural abortion method is safe for your health.
- Never use medicines to abort on your own, without medical control. These medicines can cause severe pain, haemorrhages, uterine rupture and malformations to the foetus, without causing abortion.
- After an abortion, follow your gynaecologist's advice.

**If you need advice or information, you can go to a family planning centre, a health centre or an NGO.**

## USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

City or town	Organisation	Telephone number
Barcelona	ABITS	677 51 71 66
Barcelona	Àmbit Prevenció	93 317 70 59 / 648 82 55 93
Barcelona	APIP	93 442 09 17
Barcelona	Genera	93 329 60 43
Barcelona	Metges del Món	93 289 27 15
Barcelona	Stop Sida	902 10 69 27
Calella	Programa Carretera	659 90 95 97
Girona	ACAS	972 21 92 82
Granollers	Dona x Dona	676 62 73 64
Lleida	Assoc. Anti Sida de Lleida	973 26 11 11
Lleida	Fundació Mercè Fontanilles	973 23 63 84
Manresa	Assoc. La Llum del Bages	655 38 95 46
Sabadell	Actuavallès - ACTUEM	93 727 19 00
Tortosa	Fundación Dr. Ferran	977 51 91 00 - ext. 2277

**SIDA**  
**900 212222**  
Informació confidencial i gratuïta

  
**Sanitat Respon 24 hores**  
**902 111 444**

*With the participation of:*



**Diputació  
Barcelona**  
xarxa de municipis



[www.gencat.cat/salut](http://www.gencat.cat/salut)