

Abstinence: Postponing sexual intercourse

Having sex is a big decision, and a lot of teens decide to wait.

Think about how you will know if you are ready to have sex.

Ask yourself...

- How does having sex fit with my beliefs?
- Do I feel pressured?
- Do I have to 'prove' that I love my partner?
- How might having sex change the way I feel about myself?
- Do I believe that this will be a pleasurable experience for me?
- Will sex change my relationship?
- Do I feel comfortable with my body and how it works?
- Can I talk honestly with my partner about my feelings?
- How would I feel if other people knew I was having sex?
- Am I ready for this?

Talk it over with someone you trust.

If you are not ready for sex, then abstinence is the choice for you. You decide what you are comfortable doing with your partner. Some activities you may consider are holding hands, kissing, massage, going for walks, talking, hugging, tickling, writing letters, body rubbing or touching, or kissing. You decide. Talk it over with your partner.

By choosing to have no sexual contact, you will avoid pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. If you are engaging in some sexual contact, you can be safe from pregnancy and STIs by keeping semen and vaginal fluids totally away from a partner's vagina, anus and mouth; and by avoiding the skin to skin contact that could spread herpes or genital warts (HPV).

For more information, go to [Deciding About Sex](#).