

Sexual Health During COVID-19



All Austinites should stay home and minimize contact with others to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Here are some tips for sex and intimacy during COVID-19:

Tip #1 Know how COVID-19 spreads.

- **You can get COVID-19 from a person who has it.**
 - According to the [CDC](#), the virus spreads mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
 - It may be possible that a person can 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, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.
- **We still have a lot to learn about COVID-19 and sex.**
 - The [WHO](#) does not currently indicate sexual intercourse as a means of transmission of COVID-19. However, kissing can easily spread COVID-19.

Tip #2 Have fun at a distance.

- **Go solo** – Masturbation and toy play will not spread COVID-19 to another person. Remember to wash your hands before and after and wash toys with soapy water.
- **Go virtual** – Virtual methods of sexual activity such as text, voice, photo and video can allow [consenting adults](#) to be intimate from a distance. Respect each other's boundaries and privacy.

Tip #3 Limit Sexual Partners.

- Limit sexual contact to a household partner. Make sure your household partner is practicing social distancing and good hand hygiene.

- You should avoid close contact — including sex — with anyone outside your household.
 - If you do have sex with others, have as few partners as possible.
 - Avoid new partners, anonymous sex partners and group sex.
 - Now is a great time to focus on YOU! Channel your energy into a hobby and engage in self-exploration.
- If you usually meet your sex partners online (*Tinder, OKCupid, Bumble, Grindr, etc*) – consider taking a break from in-person dates and go virtual instead.

Tip #4 Practice Safe Sex.

- **Kissing can easily pass COVID-19.** Avoid kissing anyone who is not a household partner.
- As always practice safe sex using prevention methods like condoms, lube, dental dams, insertable condoms, and pre-exposure prophylaxis (*PrEP*).
- Wash, Wash, Wash your hands for twenty seconds with soap and water before and after sex.
- COVID-19 has been found in fecal matter. Avoid activity that could allow virus from feces to enter your mouth. According to the [WHO](#), COVID-19 has been detected in feces, although the risk of catching COVID-19 from the feces of an infected person appears to be low.

Tip #5 Know when to skip sex.

- **Do not engage in sexual activity** or any physical contact if you or your partner are feeling sick or have symptoms of COVID-19. Be aware and honest about your symptoms.
- **Do not engage in sexual activity** if you or your partner are [at a higher risk](#) of severe illness from COVID-19.

Tip #6 Get creative for date night.

Just because you have to stay physically distant from your honey, doesn't mean you can't go on a great date!

- Watch a movie in parallel (*Netflix Party is available for Chrome users*)

- Follow a healthy recipe together on video chat
- Dress up and go on a date via Facetime
- Do research and plan the perfect post-quarantine date
- Go on a narrated walk- talk on the phone while walking around your neighborhood. Describe what you see around you to your partner (ex. flowers, trees, houses, general things that you are attracted to and why).

FYI These are all things that you can do with a partner you live with as well!

HIV and STI Testing, Treatment and PrEP Services in Austin:

We are here for you. Austin Public Health and local organizations continue to provide essential sexual health services at this time. Services provided may change as the situation develops. As of March 30, the following resources are available:

Austin Public Health's Sexual Health Clinic, 15 Waller Street, is currently providing STI treatment and PrEP. If you are experiencing an STI symptom, call 512-972-5430 for screening and an appointment. Routine HIV/STI screening is suspended until further notice. Call 512-972-5580 for free condom delivery.

KIND Clinic is offering all their usual services. Free services include STI testing and treatment, HIV testing and care, PrEP, PEP, and gender-affirming care. All initial appointments will be virtual with in-person follow up as needed. Call 1-833-937-5463 for an appointment. More info: kindclinic.org

Vivent Health (AIDS Services of Austin) is offering free at-home HIV testing kits and condom delivery services available. Call 512-600-8378 or visit CDNStore.org for more info. All in-person HIV & STI testing and treatment is suspended until further notice.

Center for Health Empowerment (CHE) will continue to provide free sexual health services. Services include PrEP services, HIV and STI testing and STI treatment. Call 512-840-1273 for screening and appointments.

ASH+Well will continue to provide free sexual health services. Services include HIV/STI testing and treatment, PrEP and PEP. Call 512-467-0088 for screening and appointments.