

Sex in the Dark

Fall, 2019

Panelists:

Hanna

Johanna

Kate

Sydnee

Scott

Charmaine

Questions & Responses:

How many partners should I have had by college?

- **Scott:** It is a very individual answer. We ask questions about this in our student surveys. The perception that students have is that most students aren't sexually active. The majority of people aren't sexually active. The perception is there but the reality into that. It's individual to you and what you are comfortable doing. There is no one answer for anyone.
- **Hanna:** "should" is a dangerous word when thinking about sex. You shouldn't feel the expectation to do anything. If you are concerned about meeting a body count, than that's not okay. You can live a full and happy life without ever having sex. Do you.
- **Kate:** When people come and see me and I review their sexual history people list their lifetime partner count but my experience is that I don't care. Only if it has been safe and consensual. You can be just as safe with one partner as five partners the number does not matter.
- **Charmaine:** There shouldn't be a pressure to have a certain number of partners or an expectation. I know people ask and that males ask females but all that matters it that it's safe and consensual. You can be exposed to STI but it's all about how you do it.

Is it normal to use lube?

- **Jo:** I'm going to challenge the word normal and pose the word common. Because establishing norms is almost always dangerous. It is common to use lube and it's so weird that in a lot of penile/vaginal sex that "we don't need that" "its fine" and it

shouldn't be frowned upon. It doesn't mean that you're inadequate. Things feel good in lots of different ways.

- **Britt:** Amen to lube.
- **Kate:** One big suggestion. Coconut oil is a great substitution if you don't feel comfortable buying lubricant in the store.
- **Scott:** They just think you're cooking

How can you safely do butt stuff?

- **Jo:** Lube is great. Butt stuff doesn't typically come with natural lubricant so you should challenge yourself. Little abrasions can be painful and increase the risk of spreading STIs. Be comfortable talking about what feels good and what does not feel good. You know what they say about assuming and butt stuff. It's not good to just try and see how someone is going to react. It's important to have these conversations and feel empowered to do that. Don't just try lots of different objects-- so make sure that you are using something meant for anal penetration. The anus actually sucks things up so you don't want to get yourself hurt experimenting.
- **Scott:** Safe sex isn't really a thing. It's safer sex. The anus is easy tearable / friant. It's important to use condoms for penis to anus sex. I would recommend if you are engaged with anal sex and you are visiting a practioner to share that and be open to that conversation.
- **Char:** Don't leave that out if you see a provider if you have discomfort, pain or bleeding if you see a provider. There is an increased blood supply in your rectum so be sure to share with your medical professional. Toys are safe. There are tools with ends that stop them from going up. And, make sure to clean your toys with soap and water. You do not want to have infections. You can boil them.
- **Hanna:** You can put a condom on toys. So, that makes things safer when preventing all sorts of infections. You can't always see the dangerous things that get on them, like microbes. You may think you cleaned them, but that might not be the case depending on how you cleaned and the type of toy.

How can females protect themselves during sex?

- **Syd:** If you are a female you can purchase condoms and they fit on everyone. No one is too big for them. Take care of yourself first and don't take no for an answer.
- **Jo:** There are also female condoms available and they are inserted internally.
- **Hanna:** Shout out to dental dams and if you don't have access to those, then: condoms can be turned into dental dams. If you are having regular oral sex, invest in dental dams because they have better texture/taste/etc and hold up better than condoms that were converted to dental dams. Also think about nitrile gloves because hands can have cuts on them or it can be hard to get grime off hands, both of which can cause all sorts of infections. Or maybe you speak love through food and handled

some spicy peppers before deciding to finger your vagina-having partner. When considering protection, be sure to remember about latex allergies.

If I get too scared, how can I encourage myself to do it?

- **Syd:** the first time is scary. If you have to push yourself to do it, it should be a conversation with your partner. Lubrication, communication, and consent. If you have to psych yourself up that might not be good. Talk with yourself or your partner about what you are worried about. Understanding expectations and limits with yourself and your partner is important
- **Scott:** Consuming alcohol and substances is a number one indicator isn't good because your barriers go down and you are more willing to do something that you don't want to do. Thinking about these things now and be prepared before it happens.
- **Jo:** I feel like in our society there are two dangerous narratives. Sex is a big deal to be had with the right person and super magical and rom com cinematic and that doesn't have to happen. Also, that sex is something you need to get done and you need to be so ready, confident, and able to please, increase your body count etc. Take the pressure off, is this something you want to do, like you should want to do, or what you want to say you have done.
Also, drinking or smoking beforehand -- you can't consent under the influence so if you have to consume to have sex that doesn't legally stand because you can't make an informed decision.
- **Kate:** One of the biggest things that I try to convey is the inner voice/gut that we all have and that is something that I try to emphasize because we are bombarded by societal influence. At the end of the day, there is an inner gut that tells you what you should and shouldn't do. Almost 100% of the time, your gut is right. Very rarely have I had someone say that they didn't follow their gut and were okay with that in the end. Your gut is your reflex and natural defense so it's important to listen to
- **Hanna:** Think about the narrative in your head that's causing you anxiety. Think of sex as an experience rather than a goal of orgasming or causing someone else to orgasm. Sex can be anything that's pleasurable. Whatever that looks like to you and your partner/s. Communication is key here because no one can read minds. Deconstruct achievement as a one way ticket to successful sex. It's not a healthy thing to get to and can be damaging if you think of it that way.
- **Kate:** You may not know what you want too. Self-exploration, masturbation, and on your own research is important because you can communicate what you like to your partner/s. And you can make a more comfortable and pleasurable experience that way.
- **Hanna:** If porn is a part of that experience, that's fine but don't compare your partner to what you see because porn is a constructed experience meant for entertainment.

- **Syd:** Be realistic for your first time. Realistically you will not be a sex god, the first time you have sex. And, there might be changed with each partner that you have. The first time might not be the idea sexual experience, each time is a learning experience to help you learn what you want and what you want to do differently.

How do I know if he's into it?

- **Hanna:** Ask.
- **Jo:** Stereotypes aren't fun but I'm going to try one real quickly as a queer person and as a person who has had different experiences. Straight vs queer sex and communication. Straight sex communication is disappointing. You have to ask. Sex is better if you ask and then your partner starts to ask and then you remember things and you learn about each other. Trial and error is not nearly as satisfying as communication. You might have even have to ask after a while. Pee after sex. X3
- **Syd:** Communication can be nonverbal too. Reaffirming sounds. Communicate in whatever way you are comfortable communicating.
- **Char:** If you're with a partner and they do have an expectation, sometimes you don't know. So communicate. It doesn't have to be perfect, every time can be different. You're not getting a grade after. Know that there is no pressure that way. With experience, you'll experience better experiences.
- **Kate:** relationship/partner wise-- that sounds like an anxiety about a relationship. Go back to that gut feeling. What I understand of a healthy relationship so that there isn't that anxiety. If he/she/they are not communicating or texting you back than it is important to explore why you are feeling anxious. Is it nonverbal cues or? What matters is how you feel about it.
- **Hanna:** A quick note on the gut feeling. Not everyone has a gut feeling. Particularly people that haven't had healthy relationships. Part of the abusive process is stripping away that gut feeling from the victim-survivor of abuse so they have no sense of normalcy or self-advocacy. If you know about your history-- ask your trusted friends who still have that understanding of healthy relationships to let them help you gain a better understanding. It's okay to ask for help, but don't let them become controlling of your relationships.
- **Scott:** It's all practice. I'm 43 and I think I'm just getting good at sex. No one is a sex god. Practice.

How to tell someone you're not ready yet?

- **Char:** just tell them. Don't be afraid. I remember that I was in high school in a long term relationship. I knew and believed that I wasn't ready. I said, "when I'm ready, I'll let you know"

- **Syd:** if you're comfortable maybe explain why. You don't have to explain yourself but it might help the other person contextualize where you're minds at. If she's tell you know than that should be enough and it should be taken seriously.
- **Kate:** being sexperts we might be more comfortable talking about it publicly but i also remember at 20/21 I remember not being comfortable talking about that. If you want to text, email or something that you aren't comfortable yet, express how you feel in a way that's best for you
- **Hanna:** Intimacy comes in a lot of flavors. If you are in the asexual community, you can still be intimate with your partner and never have sex. Maybe it's a not now/if/ever but maybe engage in other forms of physical intimacy like cuddling or massage.

What are the STI and Wellness Center costs?

- **Char:** We have an STI clinic if you don't have symptoms and we'll test you in different ways. You can do self-swabs if you want to do it yourself too. It's easy to make an appointment online or walk into the front office. If you feel like you have something you'll see a provider and we will test and discuss symptoms. If you don't want to go to your parents insurance than the county health department and fam-care offer ways to be tested without your parents find out. If you need treatment we can make sure that it's treatable. Just make an appointment online and we'll explain everything for you.
- **Scott:** there are lots of clinics too. So if you don't want to be seen here, make an appointment and come talk to us so we can direct you to another location.
- **Kate:** Legally, I cannot disclose any information about you to your parents. When you come into the lab, the lab results are only yours to access. Also, there are several planned parenthoods in the area. One in Bellmawr and Camden. If you signed a letter that gives direct consent for speaking to your parents than they can see your results but nothing in HIPAA gives you access. All that information is confidential. Even after your graduate because these are medical records.

I am having trouble masturbating. How do I overcome this?

- **Jo:** there's a podcast about a women who had never had an orgasm who did a bunch of research and traveled to a bunch of different places so i recommend looking for this podcast. Ultimately, if you are willing to sit with yourself and challenge why you feel the way you do, there is a lot of shame and stigma around this even though it feels like we are moving away from this. As a young person, I remember feeling shame like I was doing something wrong-- eventually that went away. Give yourself time to feel things emotionally. Porn that is with only one person is more realistic than porn that is with 2 or more people. I think watching someone that looks like you masturbate doesn't have to be a bad thing in terms of influence. It could be instructional. Sometimes you'll see something you could never do but sometimes it can be helpful.

- **Kate:** for women with a vagina, often just clitoral stimulation is what is arousing. But penetrative intercourse is focused on in porn and sex-ed. There's a good book called "Cum? As you are" but the whole point of it is that you are normal. It is normal to orgasm or not orgasm sometimes. Men and women but particularly women should get a mirror and just look at what their vagina looks like. The clitoris is nowhere near the vaginal opening so it's important to know what you're working with first.
- **Hanna:** OMGYES.com, the website-- teaches you different techniques for female bodies. Also, there are lots of queer YouTubers that have a lot of techniques on their channels and you don't have to be queer-identifying for the information to be applicable.

Is there a huge difference on if you're circumcised or not?

- If you are talking penis havers than the answer is no. There is a lot of stigma around this because circumcision is traditional. A lot of people believe we circumcise people to prevent infection later on. Now we know we can pull back the foreskin and clean but there has been a lot of body negativity around those that aren't circumcised and a lot of stigma. There is not a lot of difference between sex with a circumcised penis and not. JO: mentioned FGM

Things I am into are a result of trauma. So I don't know if I should continue letting myself have these kinks or stop liking them.

- **Syd:** I identify with this and can speak on it. As long as you are doing it safely, don't do something dangerously because you feel like you have to do it to get off. If you are uncomfortable doing something to get to that headspace. It's not worth your mental health to get to that headspace. What are you willing to do? You have to have a serious conversation with yourself about why you enjoyed that particular kink. This requires an honest conversation with yourself can you disconnect this kink from the toxic relationship.
- **Hanna:** Don't blame your kink as the reason for the traumatic experience. It was the decision of the other person not you. So keep doing what you like, so long as it's not emotionally retraumatizing for yourself.

Is sex overrated?

- **Jo:** Um, so, yes. I'm gonna say yes. Not because it's actually bad or uneventful. But, I think I say this because sex is sold everywhere to sell things. Everything is that's what she said or a euphemism. Sex is overrated because the world does not revolve around it because of the way we think that it does.
- **Hanna:** It can be overrated and you don't have to have sex to have a fulfilling life. It really, though, depends on how you define sex. With a broader definition, like a

pleasure-based experience with one or more other people, I would not say it's over rated. I am disabled so living with chronic pain and physical disabilities can make things challenging on any given day to feel positively towards my body. Sex is one of the only times that pain feels good. A pleasure-based experience with my partner can be a form of coping and empowerment. So no, sex is not over rated if you live with challenges and sex is something to change your outlook or experience, even if it's only temporary.

Is there something specific you need to do to get pregnant with twins?

- **Kate:** no, not really. It either happens naturally. A person ovulates and releases 2 eggs in one and the sperm gets to both eggs or the sperm fertilizes the eggs. In fertility treatment can increase your chance of getting twins. There is no magic juice that you can drink.
Isn't the gender based on the male anyway? It has nothing to do with the egg.

Where is the clit?

- **Hanna:** There's a few resources to check: Google image (maybe incognito) or go old-school with an anatomy textbook. Use a mirror for guide if needed.
- **Jo:** On a person that is AFAB, it's above the vaginal hole near the opening to the urethra (where you pee).
- **Scott:** if you are in a relationship with a male partner, they have no idea what's going on. The dudes will struggle with that so think about that when communicating.

Is it bad to be a virgin at 20?

- **Jo:** absolutely not. Whenever you're ready.
- **Kate:** it's also not bad to have 10 partners by the time you're 20-- as long as you are safe.

Should I get tested for STIs?

- **Char:** you want some, you gotta get tested. Show me what you got, before we do it. I think that they should know. A lot of people know. I had people who didn't get tested but they didn't get any. I didn't want anyone who could bring something into my life and relationships that I didn't want.
- **Scott:** there are more than 30 known STIs so it's all safer sex not safe sex. So the best advice is to make it a date. We get the results back and then get down to business.
- **Syd:** this is a sort of ResLife answer but if you have a friend who wants to get tested. Go with your friend. Volunteer to go with them since they told you
- **Scott:** Asymptomatic testing is important. So do it.

- **Kate:** use getting testing as a good foundation for a relationship. Do it together to have a good time.
- **Jo:** (personal/not going to type because disclosed as personal) Getting condoms are a way of showing that you are a trustworthy person.
- **Timeframe for asymptomatic testing. Char:** It can take about 4-6 weeks to show up asymptomatic testing. Sometimes you have to wait a little bit. We recommend annual STI testing just in case.

How do I get more comfortable being on top?

- Go on top more.
- **Jo:** Self-talk and building confidence. You watch these boobies and they're all sexual. Sometimes you feel like you're doing something wrong but just do what you want to do. If you don't want to do it then don't but if you do self-talk. Fake it until you make it.
- **Char:** sometimes you can try lubrication because it can ease positioning and trying something new. Put on a show.

Does losing your virginity hurt?

- **Hanna:** Well that depends on how you define sex. It doesn't have to hurt, especially if you remember lube is your friend or if your idea of sex doesn't require penetration.
- **Jo:** also, the verbiage -- losing your virginity. Virginity is not real. It's not a tangible thing but sex is real and an experience. (Assuming the person asking has a vagina) You aren't losing or gaining anything. It's all an experience. If you are having penile vaginal penetrative sex and you have no experience and there hasn't been anything in your vagina before then it's going to be a different experience. If the person asking is male, I'm not sure because I do not have a penis. You'll know the difference between this needs to stop because I am trying not to cry and something that is uncomfortable.
- **Jo:** Sex doesn't just happen to you if you are AFAB. It's your body and it's not just about the other person. Think about how you feel. Try not to think of things as something lost but rather a weird experience if you haven't done it before that you can do with another person.
- **Syd:** What you lack in skill, you can always make up for in enthusiasm. If you just lay there it can be a little bit weird. Don't worry, and don't psych yourself out. It takes longer for a woman to get ready so if he's ready and you're not, it can be a really bad experience.

Unanswered Questions

Are magnum condoms really larger, or does the condom brand not really matter?

- **Jo:** There's a lot of misinformation about this question. There's no doubt that Magnum (Trojan) has made a lot of money off of the idea that penis size is crucial to condom buying. There's also a wild amount of racism linked to this idea. When NASA was figuring out how to include women astronauts they cited concern because so many men were wetting themselves, as it turns out, it was mostly because men were lying about their penis size, and as a result, wetting themselves because their "sleeves" were too large. All this to say, people are convinced and/or are willing to go to great lengths to convince others that they are bigger than they are. Standard condoms fit most, if not all. But I am not a penis haver, and if someone insists something about their body, who am I to argue? Just bring with you whatever fancy pants gold standard condom you insist, but don't let that be the reason you don't wear protection at all.

Is it scientifically possible for a child to have 2 fathers?

- **Sydnee:** This is a crazy question. So there are two outcomes that I can think of. The first is the fact that [twins can be born from two different fathers](#). The second, called [chimerism](#), is when one person has two different sets of DNA. But a child having [JUST two fathers](#)? Not scientifically possible ... yet. If you're interested in any of the three previous outcomes, I've put some links but you can easily Google them - biology is pretty wild!

Will having sex make my relationship better?

- **Sydnee:** There are a lot of ways to read this question. I'll start by saying that **sex isn't for everyone**, and that's completely natural. **Don't let someone pressure you** into having sex, under any situation, because you think it will make the relationship better. **For some, sex is a type of physical intimacy that they enjoy in their relationships. But as talked about in Question 8, there are many types of intimacy, so sex isn't always a necessary component of a relationship.** However, if it's something you and your partner think you're ready for, it could be a positive experience for both of you. **But, regarding having a "better" relationship, I would argue that things like communication, trust, understanding, and compromise, are increasingly more important in more serious relationships.**

Is it true you should pee after sex?

- **Sydnee:** If you can, yes. It helps clean out that area, specifically after vaginal sex. But remember: **it's not a full-proof STD prevention method.**
- **Hanna:** Well if you're hydrating enough to keep up with the activities, then you might have to pee and it's not a matter of should. And who says you can't still return to cuddle after peeing?
- **Jo:** YEP MAJOR UTI PREVENTION

Is there anything specific I should be asking my partner before sex besides consent?

- **Sydnee:** **This is really going to depend on your level of comfort.** If you're not someone who can easily talk about sex, there are **other ways that you can communicate** what feels good and doesn't feel good as well as have those things communicated to you during the deed. Also, bear in mind that **you both are going to have to be comfortable enough to have this conversation.** Talking about an uncomfortable topic can cause someone to shut down, even if you're coming from a well-intentioned place. However, if you're both talkers, you **can always ask about what they prefer, what they want in that moment, what they want to do / done to them, who "goes first", what position, or how things feel.** Sex comes in a lot of different forms, so sometimes **getting to know a person's mood or headspace can clue you into what they're in the mood for.** Remember: no one is a mind reader, so with new partners, asking or picking up on nonverbal clues can help you understand their preferences.
- **Hanna:** Yes, consent! But you also should do some self-reflection about your own wants and needs before engaging with a new partner/s. It definitely can't hurt to have a conversation beforehand and it can make things feel less awkward, especially if in-the-moment communication is a challenge. Also consider if you or your partner is Trans, disabled, or has any troubles body image. If so, a conversation can alleviate many points of concern and tension. You may need to know adaptations that will improve the experience. For instance, Trans folks might have certain language or performative adjustments so things aren't dysphoric. Or a disabled person might need to discuss modifications so they can get into certain positions and draw boundaries of abilities. Another thing might be the discussion of safe words.
- **Jo:** Quite simply and brief "does this feel good? ...Do you want me to keep doing___?" are both super sexy and the best way to have ongoing consent and communication and have the best possible sex. Also, "how often do you get tested? Want to go together?" Super neat ways to promote safety and trust.

I've never orgasmed with my boyfriend or by myself. Any tips?

- **Sydnee:** (Assuming this question is being asked by someone with a vagina) so, a few things on this. Upwards of 75% of women cannot orgasm through intercourse alone, and 10-15% of women cannot orgasm at all. That's not meant to scare you! I've been there! But it's meant to reassure you that you're not the only one that struggles with this. Our perceptions of sex from media and porn are SO FAR from accurate that we start to feel less-than or frustrated when things don't go "as they should". Rest assured, there is no "normal". **Best advice: take your time and explore what feels good.** You can do this alone or with a partner. If you're comfortable using **toys, lube, or different stimulatory aids**, use them! They're your friend! This is also something you can **take some time to research** - popular, sensitive spots and how to stimulate them (incognito mode is also your friend in this situation). Also, bear in mind that **there is a link between the physical and the emotional aspects of sex**, so maybe getting out of your head and living in the moment would help.

I feel like my random hookups through no-strings attached encounters (like tinder, hinge, etc.) have made me numb to sex. It is just sex now. How can I get back to it being about connection?

- **Sydnee:** Intimacy comes in many forms and means different things to different people. And what intimacy means to you can change over time. There are times when someone craves only physical intimacy, and other times when other types, such as emotional intimacy, become more important. Odds are, you are experiencing a similar transition. As much as we like to think that "emotionless" / "no strings attached" sex can be care-free, and easy it can oftentimes carry a heavy emotional load. My best advice is to **take sex off the table until you start to establish a deeper connection (whatever that means to you) with another person.** This can be challenging but **establishing different forms of intimacy before being physically intimate can put you in a better headspace during the act and also make the act more enjoyable!**
- It's also possible to have not-that-exciting sex with someone and then later have wonderful sex with them. Don't feel doomed to have forever un-invigorating sex for life. Your experience and comfort level with partners grow and make things more exciting.

What's the difference between genital warts and herpes? How can you get rid of warts and not transmit them to others?

- **Kate:** Genital warts often present as flesh colored bumps in the genital region. Some can cause discomfort, particularly itching, while others may not show many other symptoms. They are caused by human papilloma virus (HPV) which is a very common

STI spread via skin contact. The warts themselves can be removed with medication or surgical interventions but that does not remove the virus itself and can still be transmitted sexually. However, a person's immune system can often clear the virus after several years and it is common to not get recurrent outbreaks of genital warts. Condom use helps prevent the spread of the virus and the vaccine **Gardasil**, which is recommended to be given at ages 11-12 years old but can be administered to someone up to 45 years old, provides protection against the two viral strains of HPV, strains 6 and 11, which cause genital warts. There are no long term side effects of Gardasil and is the most studied vaccine on the market. It does not prevent against prior exposures so it is best to get before one becomes sexually active or develops symptoms. Herpes is another STI caused by the transmission of the virus herpes simplex virus (HSV). HSV often presents as small, painful vesicles on the genitals or one sore on around the lips. There are two strains of HSV, HSV type I and type II. Type I often presents on the mouth and is not always spread sexually, it can be transmitted from kissing or sharing drinks. HOWEVER, type I can present on the genitals and is often transmitted when someone with an active cold sore on their mouth performs oral sex on a partner. HSV type II more commonly presents on the genitals. HSV is characterized by cycles of outbreaks and suppression. The frequency and severity of outbreaks is individual, a person can experience one outbreak and never have another or they can experience outbreaks recurrently. Outbreaks are treated with antivirals which heal the open lesions but like HPV, it does not 'cure' herpes. The person continues to have the virus for life. It is also important to recognize that many people are exposed to HSV and never have symptoms, which is why it is spread so easily. HSV it not a part of routine STD screening and is only tested for when a person reports symptoms. Sexually activity is not advised while an outbreak is occurring as that is when it is most commonly transmitted and regular condom use also reduces the risk of exposure.

Is it okay to have sex to get off bad terms with your partner?

- **Sydnee:** This is a hard question. **The short answer is no**, but I think it can be more complicated than that. There are many types of relationships, and many types of partners. In more serious relationships, communication is important. Sometimes, when something goes wrong, reestablishing physical intimacy before or after solving problems can be a good way to start or finish a conflict; **some people use sex as a form of communication (this can be a good start, but isn't the whole answer)**. You still need to be able to communicate what is wrong in the first place, otherwise it's likely that the conflict will keep eating away at you or both of you. I would also argue that it depends on what caused the "bad terms". **But mainly, if you find yourself frequently wanting to solve conflicts with sex, there may be other questions you**

need to ask yourself, like “how can I better communicate my feelings / concerns to my partner?” or “why do I feel like sex is the solution?”

- **Hanna:** Try to communicate and resolve conflict in ways other than sex. Sex can become a tool for emotional manipulation, which might be regrettable. Conflict resolution skills are vital for everyday life, so it will be unhealthy for many aspects of life if those skills aren’t developed.
- **Jo:** Sex won’t solve anything, but if you’ve solved your issues and made amends otherwise, it can be a pleasing topper.

How do lesbians use protection since condoms are usually for gay or hetero couples?

- **Hanna:** Okay, this is a lot. While most lesbian sex cannot result in pregnancy (let’s not be trans-exclusionary here), STI protection and means of birth control are still important. STIs can be transmitted more easily through oral sex or penetration (of unclean toys and/or penises). Fingering and some other forms of unprotected touch have a low risk for STI transmission, but it is possible. Still, do not overlook means of protection and test yourself regularly since many transmittable STIs are asymptomatic. For oral sex, there are dental dams and male condoms can be cut into dental dams (instructions for which can be found in the goodie bags provided on Free Condom Fridays). Fingering can be performed with nitrile gloves. Many toys can be covered by a condom.

How do I meet other gay guys without it being on Grindr? I want to experiment but not with gross people.

- **Sydnee:** I don’t have personal experience with this, but I understand the hesitation of engaging in intimacy with “just anyone”. **My first piece of advice is ALWAYS have yourself and ALL of your partners tested!** This can be at the wellness center or an off-campus resource - even people that look perfectly healthy or haven’t had many sexual partners can still be carrying something. **Secondly, I would recommend that you get involved with some of the LGBTQ+ resources on campus.** Put yourself out there :) Of course, the point of these clubs and groups isn’t for hook-ups / dating (though sometimes these relationships are formed when you meet new people), but sometimes meeting like-minded people and establishing close relationships that allow for open conversations can help you get questions answered and validate your curiosities. Meeting new people can help you increase your social circle in ways that can feel less awkward or forced than dating apps.
- **Hanna:** Yes! Shout out to queer student organizations– that’s where I met my partner. There are a handful of student organizations on Rowan’s campus, as well as programs run through the Office of Social Justice, Inclusion, and Conflict Resolution (SJICR).

Find others in the community so you can be social in ways a little less focused on hook-up culture and build meaningful, lasting relationships (platonic, romantic, and/or sexual). Those platonic connections in student groups might network you with other available queer folks, if you would rather keep platonic and romantic/sexual relationships separate.