

# “Sex Health”

Deaf Health Talks,  
March 17, 2011



# Supporters

- Deaf Health Community Committee Members
  - ◆ Michael McKee
  - ◆ Matt Starr
  - ◆ Patrick Sullivan
- Rochester Recreation Club for the Deaf (“REAP”)



# Overview

- What is sexual health?
- What are common issues with sexual health?
- What are causes for sexual dysfunction?
- What are common types of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)?
- How can we protect our sexual health?



# What is sexual health?

- Positive look at your own sexuality
- Positive look at your sexual relationship
- Sex is enjoyable
- Sex is safe
- It is never forced
- It is never abused or violent



# Health Benefits of Good and Regular (Safer) Sex

- Reduces stress
- Improves immune system
- Burns calories
- Protects heart
- Boosts self-esteem
- Boosts intimacy (“closeness”)
- Reduces body pains
- Reduces prostate cancer risk
- Strengthens pelvis
- Better sleep



# Sexual Health Issues

- Sexual dysfunction

  - ◆ Male and female

    - ◆ Common (31% of men and 43% of women have this)
    - ◆ Many do not talk about this with their doctor
    - ◆ Hormone changes such as testosterone and estrogen may be the cause



# Sexual Dysfunction- Males

- ◆ **Types of Erectile Dysfunction** (unable to get erect or stay “up” for sex)
  - ◆ Vascular (think “plumbing” issue- blood unable to swell up penis)
  - ◆ Neurogenic- (think nerve issue)
  - ◆ Hormonal- (think low testosterone)
  - ◆ Psychogenic- (think anxiety or mental issue)



# Sexual Dysfunction

- Vascular causes
  - ◆ Most common type
  - ◆ Blood flow is blocked or reduced (needed for penile erections)
    - ◆ Obesity
    - ◆ Alcohol abuse
    - ◆ Diabetes or heart disease
  
- Weight loss and healthy lifestyle is best way to help with this, not medications!
  - ◆ Medications such as Viagra, Cialis or Levitra can help



# Sexual Dysfunction- Female

- Menopause can affect sexual health
  - ◆ Estrogen levels drop causing:
    - ◆ Vaginal dryness
    - ◆ Shorter and thinner vaginas
- You can help yourself by:
  - ◆ Using water based lubricants
  - ◆ Doing more foreplay before intercourse
  - ◆ Having regular sex



# Sexual Dysfunction- Female- cont

## ■ Other common causes are:

- ◆ Stress or anxiety
- ◆ Endometriosis
- ◆ Vaginismus
- ◆ Poor relationships or boredom
- ◆ Medication side effects
- ◆ Infections or vaginitis
- ◆ Ovarian cyst or mass
- ◆ Scar from surgeries (hysterectomy)
- ◆ Chronic disease such as back arthritis or diabetes



# Female Dysfunction- What to do?

- Talk to your doctor!
  - ◆ Doctor can check for causes and offer treatments
    - ◆ Talk to your partner about pain issues
    - ◆ Different sex positions may help
    - ◆ Do relaxing activities prior to sex
    - ◆ Lubricate as needed



# What is a sexually transmitted disease or infection (STD or STI)?

- Sexual infection given by another person
- Given through sexual contact
- Can occur through:
  - ◆ Vaginal sex (intercourse)
  - ◆ Oral sex
  - ◆ Anal sex
  - ◆ Touching genitals (private parts)



# How many infections every year?

- A. ~1 million
- B. ~5 million
- C. ~20 million
- D. ~100 million



# Sexually transmitted disease or infection (STD or STI) overview

- Young people (15-24 years old) at highest risk
- But older people get it too!
  - ◆ 1 in 4 people with HIV are older than 50 years old
- All races are at risk but African-Americans are at highest risk
- Women are at high risk for serious infections
- Many infections have no symptoms!
  - ◆ You can't always know if you or your partner has it- **GET TESTED!**



# Examples of Common Sexually Transmitted Diseases

- Chlamydia
- Gonorrhea
- Human Immunodeficiency virus (HIV)
- Trichomonas
- Syphilis
- Genital herpes
- Pubic lice
- Hepatitis B
- Human papilloma virus (HPV)



# Sexually Transmitted Infections

- Incurable STI (no way to get rid of)
    - ◆ Human Immunodeficiency virus (HIV)
    - ◆ Hepatitis B
    - ◆ Human papilloma virus (HPV)
    - ◆ Genital herpes
  - Difficult to treat (resistant to treatments)
    - ◆ Gonorrhea
    - ◆ Syphilis (especially if not treated early)
- \*\*\*Goal is prevent and protect yourself from getting STI!!



# What can I do to protect myself from getting infections?

- Avoid sex (safest but not always preferred)
- Be faithful with a single trusted partner
  - ◆ Get tested prior to sex to be sure
- Use condoms (both male and female condoms are available)
- Do not rely on birth control pills to protect yourself- they don't!!
- Talk with your partner about how to be safe



# What can I do to protect myself from getting infections?- cont

- Talk with your partner about how to be safe
  - ◆ Communicate about your expectations- avoid surprises or last minute passion!
- Female to female sexual contact (lesbian sex) still need to be careful with protection
- Talk with your doctor about questions or concerns and to get tested regularly
- Avoid alcohol or drugs!
  - ◆ They make it easier for you to make bad choices



# Male Condom Use

- Different types of condoms are available
  - ◆ Latex
    - ◆ Best choice to protect yourself
    - ◆ Cheap
    - ◆ Low breakage rates- 2%
  - ◆ Polyurethane
    - ◆ Good choice if allergic to latex
    - ◆ Expensive
  - ◆ Lambskin skins
    - ◆ Protects against pregnancy but not infections!!!



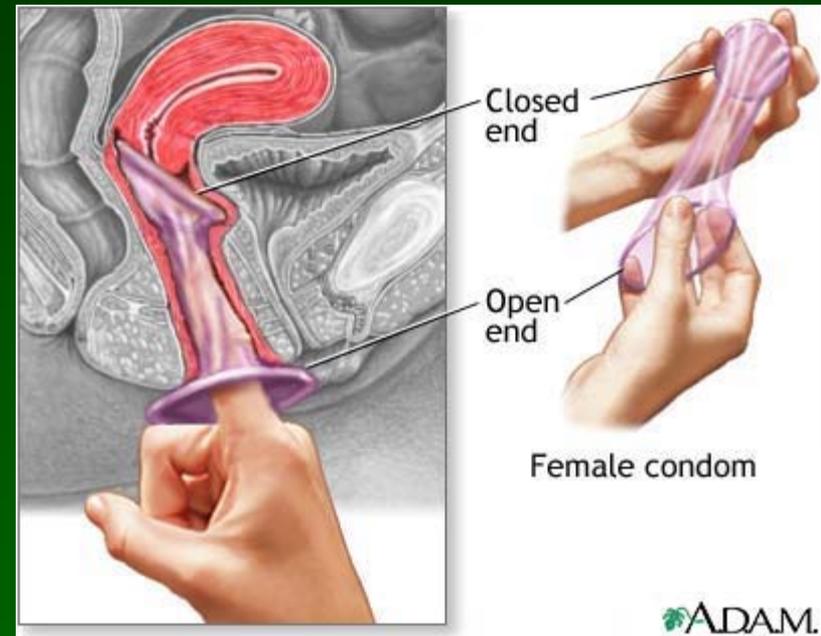
Picture 1: <http://www.womenshealthmatters.ca/centres/sex/birthcontrol/malecondom.html>

Picture 2: steadyhealth.com



# Female Condoms

- Can be controlled by the female
  - ◆ Effective
  - ◆ Expensive
  - ◆ Good choice if male partner not reliable



# Sexual Health Videos

- Check out the following websites
  - ◆ CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment/2010/clinical.htm>
  - ◆ Deaf sexual health videos
    - ◆ “Sister Lucy” videos cover sexual education videos in ASL
      - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkJCltfGMYg>
      - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFtYpOoILtI>



# How can you keep good sexual health as we get older?

- Live healthy by doing the following:
  - ◆ Exercise regularly
  - ◆ Avoid gaining weight
  - ◆ If you have diabetes, make sure you keep it under good control
  - ◆ Stay faithful with your partners and/or use safer sex practices
  - ◆ Good relationships are important



# If you have sexual dysfunction, who should you call?

- Primary Care Physician (PCP)
  - ◆ Family Medicine
  - ◆ Internal Medicine
  - ◆ Obstetrics/Gynecologists
- Specialist
  - ◆ Urologist



# Sexual Intimacy in Other Ways

- Kissing and touching
- Showing affection
- Demonstrating love and affection through actions and words



# Questions???

- Thank you!
- Next Deaf Health Talk Thursday, April 21 at 7 pm
- Rochester Recreation Club for the Deaf

