

## What is abstinence?

Sexual abstinence means different things to different people. To some it means not having any or all of the following:

- Vaginal sex
- Anal sex
- Oral sex
- Skin to skin contact, including genital touching

It can be a life choice or just a short term decision. You could choose to abstain after having been sexually active for some time. You could simply be taking a break!

## Why choose abstinence?

- Abstinence is the best protection against pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- Abstinence is a choice that everyone is allowed to make and because of that, it gives a person a sense of control over his or her decisions.
- Abstinence may match a person's religious and moral beliefs.

## How will I know if I am not ready for sex?

There are many ways to know if you are not ready to have sex with your partner. When this is the case, abstinence is the best decision. You are not ready for sex if:

- You have not found the right partner
- You are unsure about your partner
- You are not sure about the state of your relationship
- You feel you are being pressured into having sex
- You are not comfortable talking to your partner about sex

**Ways to express love without sex:**

If you are with someone you really care about, anything can be fun. There are many ways to show a person that you care about them, such as:

- Spending time with them
- Going to the movies
- Holding hands
- Hugging
- Sharing fantasies (sexual or non-sexual)

**Remember...** Abstinence is your choice. It is the only completely effective method against STIs and pregnancy.

**For more information please contact The Clinic at 519-663-5446.**

**References**

<sup>1</sup>The Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. (2009)

Choosing a contraceptive that is right for u. Retrieved from <http://www.sexualityandu.ca>

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