



Oral sex is not something that everyone does; some people enjoy it, while other people think it's unpleasant. And even though it can't lead to pregnancy, oral sex is not risk free.

Oral sex can also include "rimming" which is contact between a person's mouth and another person's anus (bum).

Oral sex is when a person's mouth is used to play with another person's genitals. So, to give someone oral sex, a person can lick, suck or kiss a guy's penis or a girl's vulva.

WHAT IS ORAL SEX?

HIV + STIs

Giving and getting oral sex puts you at risk of getting HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Oral sex is considered a low-risk activity for HIV infection. Because of how HIV infection works, you are at a bit more risk when you give oral sex than when you get it.

Oral sex can be high risk for passing on or getting infected with other STIs, like chlamydia, gonorrhoea, herpes, genital warts (HPV), syphilis and hepatitis A and B. Some of these STIs are easily treated, but they are all dangerous to your health. Some of them, like HIV and herpes, have NO cure.

If you get or give oral sex, reduce the risk of spreading STIs by always practising safer oral sex.

For a person to become infected with HIV through oral sex, these things have to take place:

- 1 The virus has to be present – one of the people involved in getting or giving oral sex has to be infected already. And since there are usually no symptoms for HIV, you can't tell by looking at someone if they are infected or not. Many people take risks and get infected without even knowing.
- 2 Blood, semen or vaginal fluids have to be present – those are the body fluids you need to be concerned about if you are giving or getting oral sex. The saliva of an infected person doesn't contain enough HIV to infect someone else.
- 3 The virus has to have a way to enter the bloodstream of the uninfected person – there has to be a cut or sore in your mouth (from dental work, brushing, flossing, eating sharp food) or on your genitals (from friction, other health problems or infections) where the virus can get in.

Safer ORAL SEX

If you choose to give or get oral sex, choose safety first. No one wants a good experience to have a bad result. Using protection during oral sex may sound like a pain, but it's a whole lot better than being infected with something that can kill you!

When used correctly, condoms and dams (dams are square pieces of latex used to cover the vulva or anus) prevent the spread of HIV and other STIs.

For more information about healthy sexuality, visit your local AIDS service organization, public health unit, or your city's member organization of the Canadian Federation for Sexual Health (Planned Parenthood).

Here are some other safer oral sex tips:

- No one likes the taste of latex - try flavoured lubes, condoms and dams to improve the experience for the person giving oral sex.
- Brushing and flossing can cause tiny cuts on your gums, which increase your risk of getting infected. Wait at least 30 minutes after brushing or flossing your teeth to give oral sex. And avoid giving oral sex after you have any kind of dental work.
- Mouthwash and other breath fresheners can dry out the delicate skin in your mouth and throat, which can lead to scratches or tiny cuts that increase your risk. Try not to use these products right before or after giving oral sex.
- Be aware that chips, popcorn and other "sharp" food can create tiny nicks or cuts in your mouth.
- There is evidence that the longer a body fluid is in the mouth, the more possible infection is. So, try to avoid getting fluids (vaginal fluids, pre-cum, ejaculate) in your mouth.

Need more HIV information and resources?

Contact CATIE
(Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange)
at 1-800 - 263-1638
E-mail: info@catie.ca
www.catie.ca

ORAL SEX

Bits + Pieces

Guys have penises

A penis can be soft (flaccid) or hard (erect), and is made of skin and tissue (no bone!). A penis has a head (called the glans) and a shaft. Some penises have foreskin and some don't. Penises are also called dicks, packages, pricks, cocks, etc.



Girls have vulvas

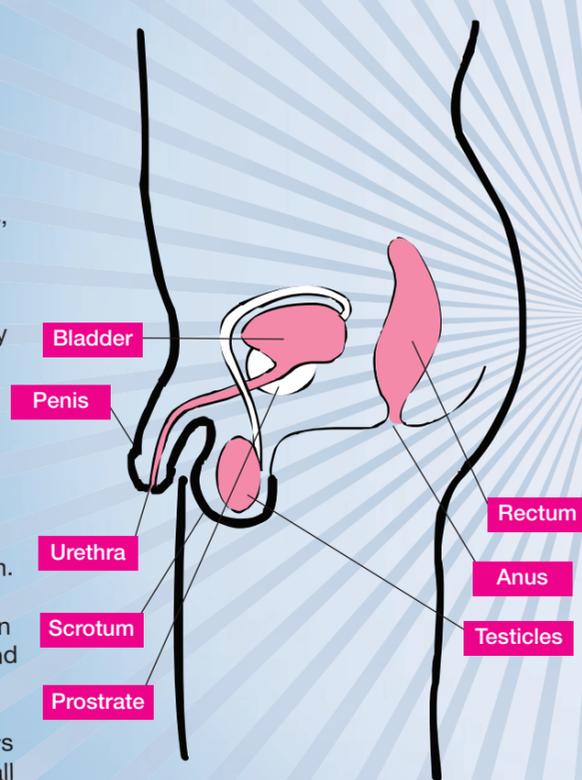
Many people call the female genitals a vagina, which is actually just one part of a girl's genitals. Along with the vagina, vulvas have other parts, including the small and large labia (also called lips) and the clitoris. Vulvas are also called pussies, muffs, snatches, etc.

ORAL SEX on a guy

Oral sex on a guy is called fellatio (fel-lay-she-o). It's also called a blow job or giving head. Using the tongue and lips on a penis can make a guy feel excited. Most guys want the focus of oral sex to be on the head of the penis, since this is the most sensitive part. Watch the teeth though – contact between a guy's penis and someone's teeth isn't usually appreciated and may detract from the fun.

When guys ejaculate (cum), they produce a body fluid called semen. Some guys also produce a bit of semen that comes to the tip of the penis when they are just getting excited – this is usually called pre-cum.

Some people like to use a combination of a hand job (rubbing the penis up and down with the hands) and a blow job. Of course, technique is a matter of personal preference and should always be discussed beforehand, as should all sexual contact.

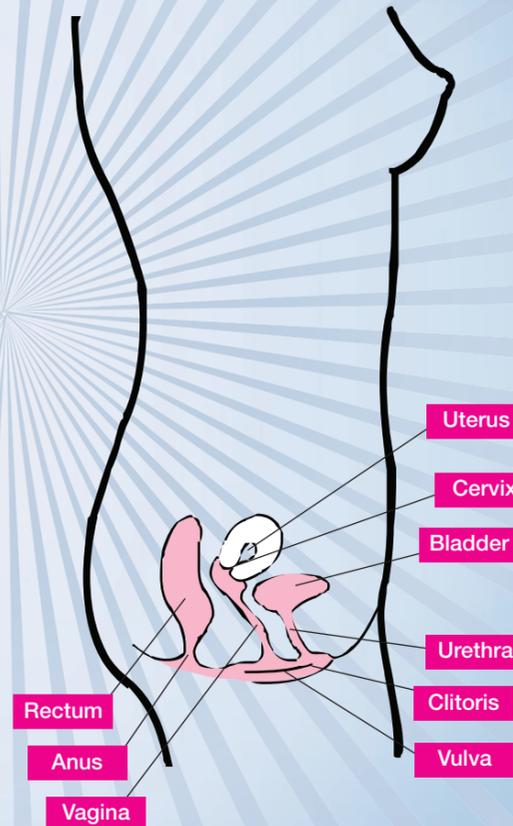


ORAL SEX on a girl

Oral Sex on a girl is called cunnilingus (cun-nil-in-gus). It's also called going down or eating out. Using the tongue and lips on a vulva can make a girl feel excited. Most girls want the focus of oral sex to be on the clitoris (clit) which is the most sensitive part. Holding the outer lips back gently with the hands will allow for easier exploration of the whole area.

When a girl is excited, the walls of her vagina may get wet and produce a body fluid called vaginal fluid. Some girls also produce a bit of fluid that comes out of the urethra when they have an orgasm – some call this ejaculate or cum.

Some people insert a finger or toy inside the vagina during oral sex on a girl to add some extra stimulation. What one girl likes may be very different from what another girl likes. All sexual contact should be discussed beforehand.



Pros + Cons of getting or giving ORAL SEX

Pros:

- no risk of getting pregnant/getting someone pregnant
- may feel good about getting or giving sexual attention
- may feel a sense of power
- may feel that virginity is saved
- may avoid anxiety that can be associated with other sexual contact such as intercourse.

Cons

- may feel unsure about how to give oral sex
- may feel guilty if getting oral sex but not giving it in return
- may feel angry if partner won't give oral sex
- may feel anxious about partner being that close to genitals
- may affect how other people think of you
- risk of sexually transmitted infections.