

feel a little uncomfortable at first, but your vagina will quickly accommodate to the activity. Your best bet is to make sure you spend plenty of time on foreplay so you're ready for the main event; you'll be less likely to have any discomfort.

#5 My boyfriend wants to try anal sex, but I'm worried he might injure me. How dangerous is it?

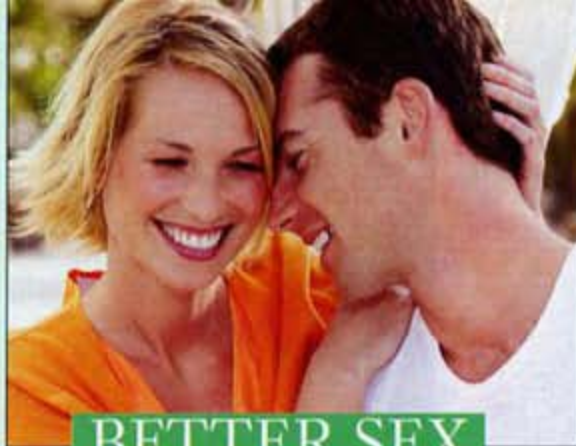
It depends on how wild he's planning on getting—anal sex is dangerous only if you're penetrated very rigorously, says Soltes. If you want to try it, you should use plenty of lubrication and proceed very slowly. If it's painful—or if the idea just doesn't do anything for you, skip it and suggest you try something else new and different instead. (And, of course, use condoms if you decide to give this a try.)

#6 Some of my friends never sit down on a public seat because they say you can catch a sexually transmitted disease that way.

The chance of getting a sexually transmitted disease from a toilet seat are quite slim; the viruses, parasites and bacteria that cause them don't live long outside the human body. You can, however, get bacterial contamination from the toilet seat that can cause skin breakouts, so your friends may have a point. Use seat protectors or perfect the "crouch" maneuver to prevent this.

#7 Lately I've had terrible itching in my rectum. Could I have hemorrhoids?

Yes, it sounds like hemorrhoids, which are an "outpouching" of the vessels in the rectum, says Soltes. There are a lot of blood vessels in the rectal area and pressure—like straining on the toilet or giving birth, for example—can cause them to pop out. Hemorrhoids can become very sore and swollen and may cause itching, but an over-the-counter steroidal ointment should relieve your symptoms. To help prevent them, drink plenty of water and eat more fiber to reduce your risk of constipation (which is one of the primary causes).



BETTER SEX

Sexual Enhancement

"Since having my two children and as I've gotten a little bit older, I'm starting to notice that things aren't as tight...down there. I still want a satisfying sex life! Is there anything I can do to assist with vaginal tightening?"



Leading OB/GYN Dr. Shamsah Amersi, MD, and her son Jaden

We know exactly what you're talking about! Vaginal muscle relaxation can be an unwanted result of aging, childbirth or muscular de-conditioning. When this happens, the vagina is no longer at its optimum physiological state. In an effort to turn back the clocks on their love lives, vaginoplasty—a cosmetic surgery to tighten the vagina—has become a popular option for some women. But if you're looking for a less invasive solution, you're in luck! We've heard great things about the new product from Peak Response, pk24, the first and only clinically tested anti-aging vaginal rejuvenation cream that helps temporarily tighten and reduce the interior dimensions of the vagina. Dr.

Shamsah Amersi, a leading obstetrician/gynecologist in the Los Angeles area and consulting physician to pk24, recommends trying this innovative product before considering any type of surgery. pk24 (a 1 oz. bottle retails for about \$59.95 at peakresponse.com) aids in the temporary tightening and can help return the vagina to a more "youthful" physiological state to enhance sexual gratification for a woman and her partner. The unique blend of components in pk24 hydrates the interior walls of the vagina, which creates the tightness. Apply a small amount of the cream to your index finger and gently massage it on the interior walls of the vagina. The tightening can be felt just 10 minutes after the application and can last up to 24 hours. Editor's Note: Through her practice in Santa Monica, CA, Amersi is the personal physician to several Hollywood A-list celebrities.



How pk24 came about

While attending a friend's party in 2001, Peak Response founder and Chief Executive Officer Terralynn Hoy overheard a shocking conversation among several men, who didn't know she and their wives were listening.

"One of the husbands made a very off-handed remark about what he would do to be 20 years old and have those days back. The other men laughed and agreed," says Hoy. "Then another husband made a comment that shocked us all. He said, 'You know I love my wife but three kids have really loosened things up down there.'"

"Quite honestly, this was the first time I had ever heard a comment like this," Hoy reveals. "My girlfriends never complained about this side effect of childbirth, and my mother never mentioned it, either. I remembered a high school P.E. teacher talking to us about Kegels and I wondered, could this be what she was referring to?"

Hoy decided to conduct some research and quickly discovered that vaginal relaxation was a real condition, but was a private matter and so was rarely discussed. Most women end up accepting the change as a part of aging, and women who decide to take action often believe their only option is to undergo an expensive surgical procedure. Hoy became interested in finding a solution to vaginal relaxation and soon established a relationship with a manufacturer of natural products. After four years of research, formulation and product testing, the result was pk24.

#8 I just started dating a new guy. After our first weekend together, I had a terrible urinary tract infection. Is this because of all the sex we had?

Probably—urinary tract infections are sometimes called "honeymoon cystitis" for a reason. The action of sexual intercourse can force bacteria into your urethra, where it can cause infections. You can prevent an infection by urinating immediately after sex to wash away any bacteria and by drinking lots of water and cranberry juice. Also, make sure you wipe "front to back" when you go to the bathroom to prevent any bacteria from your vagina or rectum from getting into your urethra. Make sure you see your doctor regardless—what seems like a urinary tract infection may be a symptom of a sexually transmitted disease or another condition called interstitial cystitis that requires different treatment.

#9 I'm blessed with a big chest, but I've noticed since I turned 30 that my breasts are starting to sag. What can I do to keep them from drooping?

While you can't do anything about gravity, wearing the right kind of bra—especially during workouts—will help keep your breasts where they're supposed to be, says Angela Smith, MD, a physician at Children's Hospital in Philadelphia, PA. Cooper's ligaments, the connective tissue that makes your breasts stay up, stretch over time due to gravity and aging, so give them all the help they can get with bras that are comfortable but supportive.

#10 My boyfriend and I are exclusive, and we're no longer using condoms. Lately I've noticed some vaginal itching and I think it's a yeast infection. Can I treat it with over-the-counter medicine?

Don't assume it's a yeast infection—it may be something more serious. Common vaginal infections, like trichomoniasis and bacterial vaginosis, are often sexually transmitted and can be passed back and forth between sexual partners. Because sexually transmitted diseases may have few symptoms, it's important to check out any unusual itching, discharge or vaginal changes with your physician ASAP. **CW**