Dear Alice!

I am not actually worried but simply curious. When petting with my boyfriend and getting in contact with his sperm, my skin turns slightly red where his cum touches me. Am I allergic, or is there perhaps any other explanation? I am 24 years old and female.

Thank you in advance.

? Sex Flush

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**Allergic to semen? [1]**

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**Answer**

Dear Sex Flush,

Sounds like this petting may be getting you all hot and bothered and not necessarily in a pleasant way! You could be right - you may have an allergy to the proteins in your boyfriend's semen, also known as human seminal plasma protein hypersensitivity (SPH). It's possible to have allergies to common proteins found in most men's semen or to have allergies to a specific person's proteins. Reactions to contact with semen may include localized pain, itching, redness and swelling, or systemic responses, like hives or trouble breathing. Most symptoms typically start within 20 to 30 minutes of contact and can last for hours or days. The severity of the reaction depends on your personal body chemistry.

If you're experiencing redness or itching around the vagina, other potential explanations may include a yeast infection, bacterial vaginosis [2], or a sexually transmitted infection (STI), such as chlamydia [3]. If you do have a semen allergy, treatment options may include using a condom or desensitization. A condom will keep come from contacting your skin during vaginal sex or hand jobs. If your allergic reaction from petting isn't too serious of a problem, you could just try to minimize your contact with the semen - catching it in a small towel might keep most of it off your skin. Also, there are a couple possible ways for a health care provider to desensitize a person to semen. You might want to speak with your health care provider to figure out the best option for you.

It sounds like your symptoms aren't very severe. However, if you develop more serious reactions or suspect you might have an STI, you may want to see a health care provider. Until then, hopefully you can reassure your boyfriend that semen allergies aren't personal, and
really, you're flushing with delight in his presence.

Alice!
Category:
Sexual & Reproductive Health [4]
Miscellaneous [5]

Related questions

Hives? [6]
Desensitization for allergies (immunotherapy) [7]
Allergic to latex condoms [8]
Foaming after sex [9]
My boyfriend's semen is chunky? Is this normal? [10]

Resources

Medical Services (Morningside) [11]
Medical Services (CUMC) [12]
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