

Urethritis, or what? ^[1]

Alice,

My boyfriend has had pain during urination and ejaculation. We have been only with each other for the past year and neither of us have std's. The info I have found on the internet makes me believe maybe he has urethritis. My question is, can you cause damage to the urethra during oral sex? I don't want to get too personal, so I will leave it alone, but I want to know, can you cause damage due to any force to the urethral opening?

Answer

Dear Reader,

It's unclear from your question whether your boyfriend always or only sometimes has pain with urination and ejaculation. A good rule to go by is the following: whenever someone has either constant or recurrent pain, it's time to confer with a health care provider to get some answers.

It's common for men to have a burning sensation, discomfort, or pain when they first urinate directly after ejaculation; this is because friction applied to the urethra during masturbation, anal or vaginal intercourse, or receiving oral sex can cause some minor irritation to the tissues of the urethra. The urine passing over these irritated tissues causes a burning sensation. However, pain while urinating and/or ejaculating can also occur with inflammation or infection of many of the structures of the urinary/reproductive tract, such as the urethra (tube that leads from the bladder out the end of the penis), prostate (gland that encircles the neck of the bladder and urethra), and epididymis (sperm-carrying tube within the testicles). Both sexually-transmitted and other types of infections can affect all of these structures. Allergies to ingredients used in lube and/or latex condoms, or mechanical injury to the urethra from objects inserted into the penis, could also cause your boyfriend's discomfort.

In order to diagnose an infection in your boyfriend's reproductive/urinary tract, he usually needs to provide a urine sample for testing. A sterile swab may be inserted into the tip of his penis to get material from the urethra for analysis. Pressure on the prostate may be applied during a rectal exam, in order to obtain prostate fluid for examination.

If your boyfriend does have an infection, it will probably be treated with antibiotics directed

against the specific organism that is identified. Sometimes, even if no organism is identified, a trial of antibiotics is given, to see if the symptoms are relieved. If antibiotics don't relieve your boyfriend's symptoms, he may be referred to a specialist in the urinary tract (urologist), who may wish to use a magnifying scope instrument to examine your boyfriend's urinary tract in an attempt to figure out why he is having such regular discomfort and pain.

Regarding your question about oral sex causing damage to the urethra: receiving plain ol' oral sex may cause irritation to the urethra, as described above, but it's unlikely to cause actual physical damage. However, inserting items into the urethra could potentially cause irritation or damage, and could also certainly introduce a variety of organisms that could cause serious infection.

Your boyfriend can experiment with emptying his bladder prior to (and after) sex. These simple acts also can help to reduce irritation.

Alice!

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