Dear Alice,

What are the risks of contracting a sexually transmitted disease if a woman performed oral sex on a man without a condom?

Thank you,
Worried

Answer

Dear Worried,

When the mouth and tongue are healthy and uncut, the chance of getting a sexually transmitted infection (STI) through oral sex is uncommon, though possible. Sores or scrapes in the mouth present a ready passage-way for virus or bacteria to enter the blood stream. Unless you're 100 percent sure of your partner's clean bill of sexual health, it's a good idea to use protection if any cuts, tears, sores or scrapes are present in the mouth (even tiny sores, like accidentally biting your tongue). Additionally, after you've had your wisdom teeth yanked, a root canal performed, or your dentures re-fitted, it's wise to stay away from unprotected oral sex (even if your partner is STI-free, your dentist would probably advocate treating your mouth gently after any of these procedures).

STIs, such as gonorrhea [2], syphilis, chlamydia [3], and HIV, can be transmitted through contact with bodily fluids, including pre-ejaculatory fluid or ejaculate. Herpes and human papillomavirus (HPV) can also be passed on through oral sex. Although these cases are rare, transmission is possible, and if you don't want to gamble with your health you could try using an un-lubricated condom or a dental dam [4] during oral sex.

Check out Oral sex and herpes: A triple header [5] and the related Q&As to read more about this issue. Although STI transmission is possible through oral sex, it happens rarely. Perhaps with this information, you could change your signed name from "worried" to "wary" or "wise"?

Alice!
Category:
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- Cunnilingus and sore throat?
- Oral sex, STIs,... and braces
- Oral sex etiquette
- Condom = safer male to male oral sex?
- Yeast infection (thrush) from oral sex?

Resources

- Medical Services (Morningside)
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Published date:
Sep 01, 1994
Last reviewed on:
Jul 27, 2015

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