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LUBE: PART OF EVERY SAFER SEX TOOLKIT

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THE SLIPPERY STUFF

WHY LUBE?

Often, when sex educators talk about safer sex they leave out lube. This is a shame because lube belongs in everyone's safer sex toolkit! Friction during sexual contact can cause tiny tears or irritation of the delicate tissues of the vagina and anus. These abrasions increase the risk of passing infections such as HIV. Additionally, too much friction can cause condoms to break which increases the chance of contracting an STI or accidentally becoming pregnant. Lube decreases friction and makes sex safer!

One common misconception is young people or people who are turned on don't need to use lube. But almost everyone can benefit from lube, and sometimes it's necessary! If you have a vagina, things like age, medication, having had a drink, or simply being at a certain point in your menstrual cycle can mean your body doesn't produce enough lubrication to make sex comfortable. Additionally, some sexual acts like anal sex require lube, because the rectum does not produce any lubrication of its own.

It's also important to note that lube often makes sexual contact more enjoyable, whether you're masturbating or playing with a partner. There's nothing to be embarrassed about, and you'll be more comfortable and safer with some of the slippery stuff!

WHICH LUBE?

There's a wide variety of lubes and not everyone likes the same kinds. Some stores will have samples so you can try them out before committing to buying a whole bottle.

WATER BASED LUBES have water as one of the main ingredients, and are some of the most popular lubes on the market. Water based lubes will eventually be absorbed into your skin and the additives left behind may leave a sticky residue which some people dislike. Water based lubes are also compatible with practically every sex toy. Because additives vary between brands, there is a wide variety of water based lubes and you may want to try a few. Some folks avoid glycerin which may cause irritation if you are prone to infection and have a vagina. Other folks avoid parabens, preservatives, or animal products. There's a lube out there for everyone, so do some research and give it a try.

SILICON LUBES are super slippery and long lasting. Because they aren't water soluble they are harder to wash off and may stain sheets. You shouldn't use a silicon lube with a silicon toy as it will often cause a reaction that will damage the material (this isn't true of all silicon lubes and toys, check out manufacturer websites for recommended lubes). Silicon is ultra slippery and doesn't usually require re-application which many people really like. There is less variety in texture and thickness in silicon lubes.

OIL BASED- Some commercial lubricants contain oils. These are often meant as masturbation lubricants for people with penises because oils can irritate vaginas and will degrade condoms, making them likely to break.

DO NT: You may come across lubes that contain an anesthetic, often marketed for anal sex. This is a BAD IDEA. Masking pain increases the risk of tearing the delicate tissues in the rectum. Use a thick lube, go slow and pay attention to your body.

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