

KEEP *her* AWESOME

TALKING TO YOUR PARTNER ABOUT BV

Are you embarrassed to bring up bacterial vaginosis (BV) with your partner? Over 21 million women in the U.S. get BV every year—it's nothing to be ashamed of.¹

The best defense can be a good offense. So here's a helpful guide to make breaking the news to your partner less nerve-wracking.

Before telling your partner, remember: IT'S NO ONE'S FAULT!

STEP 1: Brush up on BV facts

1 IN **3**
WOMEN

get BV at any point in time¹

But BV can be treated effectively with a prescription from your healthcare provider.



STEP 2: Sit them down

- Start with the facts:
 - **BV is a common vaginal infection and is caused by an imbalance of bacteria that live naturally in the vagina.¹**
 - **BV is not an STI or a matter of poor hygiene.²**
- If you have a lady lover, she may be at risk for contracting BV.³ Explain that she should visit a healthcare provider too. Whether your partner is male or female, you will need to abstain from intercourse for a little while. Semen and sex toys can affect your vagina's natural balance and lead to irritation or an imbalance of bacteria.^{4,5}
- Tell your partner how long you'll be on treatment. He or she will want to know when all systems are go!

STEP 3: Practice prevention

- Always use condoms to help keep your vagina's pH level within normal limits.⁵
- Wash sex toys carefully, especially if anal sex is involved; they can harbor bacteria.⁴

Visit keeperawesome.com for additional resources and information about BV.

1. Koumans EH, Sternberg M, Bruce C, et al. The prevalence of bacterial vaginosis in the United States, 2001-2004; associations with symptoms, sexual behaviors, and reproductive health. *Sex Transm Dis.* 2007;34(11):864-869. 2. Brotman RM. Vaginal microbiome and sexually transmitted infections: an epidemiologic perspective. *J Clin Invest.* 2011;121(12):4610-4617. 3. Donders G. Diagnosis and management of bacterial vaginosis and other types of abnormal vaginal bacterial flora: a review. *Obstet Gynecol Surv.* 2010;65(7):462-473. 4. Planned Parenthood. How do I prevent vaginitis? <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/health-and-wellness/vaginitis/how-do-i-prevent-vaginitis>. Accessed August 13, 2019. 5. Ma L, Lu Zhi, Su J, Wang J, Yan D, Wei J, Pei S. Consistent Condom Use Increases the Colonization of *Lactobacillus crispatus* in the Vagina. *PLoS ONE.* 2013. 8(7): e70716. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0070716>. Accessed August 8, 2019.