

Sexual Health and Reproduction

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In this activity you will search for answers to questions dealing with sexual health and reproduction by using the Internet. Be sure to **write your answers in your own words**. You can ask your instructor for help if you need it. If you have extra time, you can explore any of the websites listed to investigate additional topics.

For questions that don't have specific websites listed, you can search for answers using:

- **Medscape** www.medscape.com
- **Healthfinder** www.healthfinder.gov
- **HeliosHealth** www.helioshealth.com
- **Medhunt** www.hon.ch
- **National Institutes of Health** www.nih.gov/health
- **Mayo Clinic** www.mayohealth.org.
- **KidsHealth: teens** www.kidshealth.org/ and go to "teens"
- **Information on puberty and teens' health issues** www.teengrowth.com

While there are lots of websites besides these, you should stick to and are trustworthy, and it is important to make sure you are getting accurate information. Generally, you can check the reliability of a website by a number of criteria:

- Medical schools, the government, or other organizations that have a reputation for being trustworthy usually have reliable information on their websites.
- Websites endorsed by someone you trust (such as your teachers) are also generally reliable.
- A reliable website should also clearly indicate who prepared the information on it, and when it was last updated (make sure the information on the website isn't outdated).

The websites listed in these instructions are reliable.

¹ Teachers are encouraged to copy this student handout for classroom use. A Word file (which can be used to prepare a modified version if desired), Teacher Preparation Notes, comments, and the complete list of our hands-on activities are available at http://serendip.brynmawr.edu/sci_edu/waldron/.

Other Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Sources you can use:

- http://www.cdc.gov/nchstp/dstd/disease_info.htm

(This Web address has an underline between disease and info.)

Do a search for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) other than HIV using the sources listed on the first page.

1. What are some other sexually transmitted diseases? Name at least two.
2. How can you tell if you have the STDs that you listed? What are some of their symptoms?
3. What are the effects of these STDs on a person's health? Do these STDs have different effects on men and women? Do these STDs affect a woman's ability to have children?
4. How can you protect yourself against getting STDs?

Risks of Alcohol and Smoking during Pregnancy

Many studies have shown that drinking alcohol or smoking when pregnant can be dangerous to the baby. Drinking and smoking can cause low birth weight or birth defects. Using the websites listed on the first page, search for “Fetal Alcohol Syndrome” or “smoking and pregnancy” to find answers to the following questions.

1. If a pregnant woman drinks 2-5 alcoholic drinks per day, what effects does this have on the developing baby?
2. What is Fetal Alcohol Syndrome? What problems will a baby born with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome have in later life when he or she is a child or adult?
3. If a pregnant woman smokes cigarettes, what effects does this have on the developing baby? List some of the problems that the baby can develop as a result of being exposed to cigarette smoke.
4. How are alcohol and chemicals from cigarette smoke carried to the fetus?

Fetal Development

Sources you can use:

- <http://www.helioshealth.com/pregnancy/baby/>
- www.mayohealth.org -- search for prematurity
http://www2.medsch.wisc.edu/childrenshosp/parents_of_premies/index.html -- click on Table of Contents
(This Web address has underlines between the words parents, of and premies.)

Pregnancy occurs as a result of conception – the fertilization of an egg by a sperm – and continues until the birth of the baby. During pregnancy, the developing individual is called an embryo until all of the basic organs have formed – at that point, the embryo is referred to as a “fetus.”

1. How many weeks after conception does the embryo in the mother’s womb become a fetus? In other words, how many weeks does it take for all of the basic organs to form?
2. How many weeks after conception does the first heartbeat occur?
3. At what point (how many weeks after conception) can the sex of the embryo or fetus be determined? In other words, at what point does the embryo or fetus develop male and female organs)?
4. How big is the fetus by the time it has a heartbeat and has developed a brain, hands, and feet?
5. About how many weeks after conception is the fetus fully developed and ready for birth?
6. What are some of the risks for babies born prematurely or with a low birth weight?

Changes during Puberty

Sources you can use:

- go to www.kidshealth.org/teen/ and do a search for “puberty”
- go to www.healthfinder.gov and do a search for “puberty”

1. What is puberty?
2. What are some of the changes that boys experience during puberty? What is the typical sequence of these changes?
3. What are some of the changes that girls experience during puberty? What is the typical sequence of these changes?
4. What hormones cause the changes that happen during puberty?
5. What causes girls to get their period? What hormones are responsible? What is happening inside girls' bodies? (You can use the back of this page if you need more space.)

Answer Your Own Question

After completing one of the previous pages, you can use this space to make up your own question and find the answer to it by using the Internet. Have your question approved by your instructor before researching its answer.

Question:

Answer: