

# HipPocrates

Eugene Schoenfeld M.D.

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Dr. Eugene Schoenfeld speaking at Community Arts Auditorium, May 28, 1969 at a benefit for Open City.  
Photo: Alan Gotkin.

QUESTION: I have six children and would like to find a way to present my soul-mate with a more shrunken area to play in. Dig?

My physician told me that I had an unusually good pelvic floor for having had so many children (whatever that means). I have exercised my vaginal muscles but I think I have accomplished all that can be done that way. My husband is sweet and says it doesn't make that much difference, but...

Incidentally, I called my doctor to ask if I could have some kind of surgical repair. But the nurse I had to clear it through was grossly offended, wouldn't bother the doctor with it and called me a "perverted slut."

How do them up-tight apples grab ya?

ANSWER: If there's any perversion here it comes from the nurse and not you. I think you should bring this matter directly to the attention of your physician—he may not know the harm being done by his nurse.

Surgical procedures are sometimes performed in a case such as yours and a gynecologist could give you a definitive answer.

QUESTION: What hassles are involved for an operation to sterilize the female? I've been married and on the pill (only acceptable method of contraception for me) for 5 years.

I've had none of the typical pill troubles but wonder about long-term effects. Also I think it's pretty silly for me to keep paying even nominal pill prices when my husband and I are sure we never want children.

Can one just ask any gynecologist? Must several ap-

prove? Is the fact that I just do not want kids reason enough? I'm 23.

ANSWER: Female sterilization requires making incisions in the abdominal wall, cutting the fallopian tubes and suturing (sewing up) each of the several ends. Another method involves making an incision in the back of the vagina and gaining access to the tubes without cutting the abdominal wall.

When the tubes are tied off in this fashion, spermatozoa entering the uterus cannot meet the ova, or eggs, released by the ovaries and traveling down the fallopian tubes. Once the tubes are severed, chances for pregnancy are extremely small. Even attempts at reuniting severed tubes (if the woman later changes her mind) are almost always unsuccessful.

The chances of finding a gynecologist who would sterilize a childless 23 year old woman are also extremely small. Your potential child-bearing years could last another 20 years or more and no one can foresee where your head might be during that time.

A study of birth control pill side effects completed recently in England showed an increased incidence of blood clots, some of which were fatal. These findings have been disputed by some American physicians. Assuming that the study was valid, it may be that the new lower dose pill forms have decreased these side effects.

A study of this question in American women is scheduled for completion this summer. At present there is no recommended limitation on the length of time the pills may safely be used.

QUESTION: I recently had intercourse with a guy I just met who has just left for California and I have no way of contacting him.

Well, I've just begun to have pains when pressure is applied to the general area of the ovaries. I've never had these pains before and was just wondering if it's anything I should be concerned with.

Also, I think I might have certain psychological problems and would be interested in discussing them with a competent psychiatrist. But shit, who's got the bread? What do you suggest I do?

ANSWER: The pain you describe could be caused by a number of things (including psychological problems).

Gonorrhea in the female often goes unnoticed until the disease affects the uterus, tubes and ovaries. Pelvic inflammatory disease, (PID) is most often caused by gonorrhea and is an important and growing cause of sterility due to scarring of the fallopian tubes. Any unusual itching or suspicion of contact with gonorrhea is sufficient reason for an examination by a physician.

Males almost always know they have gonorrhea because of the discharge and painful urination. Females usually don't recognize the early symptoms. Every male who knows he has gonorrhea should notify all his female sexual contacts, for failure to do so may cause them to become sterile.

Information about free or low cost psychotherapy is available through your city or county public health department.

*Editors' Note:* In Detroit call Open City at 831-2770 for information on counseling and therapy.

QUESTION: When I am about to have a climax, many times I get a charley-horse in my foot or leg. Is there any way to prevent this?

P.S. I am a female.

ANSWER: My limber secretary suggests that daily calisthenics may be useful preventative medicine. A timely foot massage is suggested by her boyfriend. She says he spurs her on...

*Dear Dr. Hippocrates* is a collection of letters and answers published by Grove Press. \$5 at your favorite bookstore.

Dr. Schoenfeld welcomes your questions. Write to him c/o P.O. Box 9002, Berkeley California 94709.

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