

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.

Detroit: Planned Parenthood League, Inc. at the- Professional Plaza Con-Course Building, 3750 Woodward Ave. 48201, Phone: 313-832-7200.

QUESTION: Are there any medical reasons for not having intercourse during menstruation?

ANSWER: There are no known medical reasons against having sexual intercourse during menstruation. In fact, some women feel more erotic at this time.

QUESTION: I have a problem which is embarrassing and troublesome to me. A few weeks ago, I balled for the first time (incidentally, I'm a girl) and bled an awful lot.

I would like to know: Is the bleeding just because it was the first time? Or is there something wrong with me?

If not, could you tell me how to stop the bleeding? I'm sort of doubtful about doing it again until I have an answer.

ANSWER: There's no doubt at all you should learn more about your own body, and soon. Bleeding is normal in a female the first few times she has sexual intercourse. The cause is tearing or stretching of the hymen, a tissue membrane nearly covering the entrance to the vagina (small perforations in the hymen permit the passage of the menstrual flow).

Many girls are free of bleeding and pain even the first time they have sexual intercourse. Their hymens may have been stretched or torn by exercise or childhood accidents. Some women, though, have hymenal tissue so tough that minor surgery is required before normal relations can begin.

You should soon have a thorough pelvic examination and discussion with a physician about ways to prevent pregnancy. If you can't afford a private physician contact the nearest Planned Parenthood office.

Ann Arbor: The Washtenaw County League for Planned Parenthood at 122-1/2 E. Liberty Street 48103, phone: 313-663-3306

A woman with a 28 day cycle will normally ovulate On the 14th day, counting the first day of menstruation as day one. The optimum time for achieving pregnancy, given this cycle, is day 14, but wide variations are found from one female to another.

The “safest” times during a woman’s menstrual cycle are five days before, during and 3 days following menstruation. But pregnancy has been known to occur even when intercourse took place only during menstruation.

The rhythm method is so notoriously poor in achieving birth control, it has been called “Vatican roulette.”

QUESTION: I have a story I would like to relate to you. Here it is: Herb visited Linda in December and again in July. He did not see her in the six months in between and therefore did not ball her during that time.

Linda stopped taking her birth control pills early in April and became pregnant later that month. She claims that Herb is the father. That she carried around the sperm (or the fertilized egg) from December until April and when she stopped taking birth control pills became pregnant. She is now 4 months pregnant.

A psychiatrist told Herb that this is possible. The Free Clinic said it was impossible. I personally don’t believe it. Have you ever heard of this? Do you think it could happen?

ANSWER: Linda will have to accept some other explanation. Pregnancy could occur, for example, without intercourse if the sperm were deposited at or near the vaginal entrance. Perhaps Herb misinterpreted the psychiatrist’s words. He might have said something like, “Well, anything is possible, but...”

Spermatozoa can remain alive in the vagina no more than 2 or 3 days whether or not a woman is taking birth control pills. Deep freezing can maintain sperm cells in a state of suspended animation for long periods of time. But your friend would have had to be quite literally frigid for this phenomenon to occur.

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

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

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