

When Your Partner Wants to Have Sex (and you don't)



What can you do if your partner wants to have a sexual relationship and you don't? Saying no to someone you are dating or even in love with can be tough. But it is important to honor your feelings and stick to your limits. How can you bring up the subject? What can you say? These tips will get you started.

1. Be clear with yourself.

- ✓ Why do you want to wait?
 - Do you want to protect yourself from HIV or other sexually transmitted infections?
 - Do you want to avoid an unplanned pregnancy?
 - Do you feel like you are too young?
 - Do you believe in waiting until marriage?
- ✓ When you are clear about your reasons for waiting, it will be easier to stick to your limits. It will also be easier to talk with your partner about your decision.

2. Talk early.

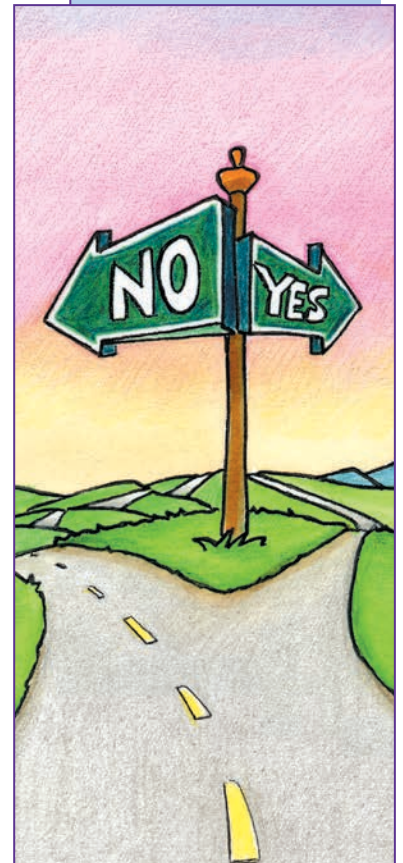
- ✓ Bringing up the subject of sex can be difficult. But it is better to talk early so you both know where you stand.
- ✓ Bring up the subject when you are in private. Try saying, *"I know we're becoming closer. I want to talk about sex and why I want to wait."*
- ✓ It's best to set limits before you become intimate. But if you are already in the heat of the moment, you can say, *"I'd like to stop now. I don't want to go any further."*

3. Listen to your partner's feelings.

- ✓ Your partner may understand and support your decision not to have sex – but he or she may still feel insecure or hurt.
- ✓ Listen to how your partner feels. Reassure your partner that your decision is about respecting your needs, not rejecting his or her feelings.

4. Show you care in other ways.

- ✓ Take the time to show you care in other thoughtful ways.
- ✓ Give your partner love notes or small gifts to show how special he or she is to you.
- ✓ Suggest doing something together that you know will be special for your partner.



5. Avoid temptation.

- ✓ If you care about the person, you may be having sexual feelings too. It's best to avoid situations that make it harder to say no.
- ✓ If your partner says, "Hey, no one is home at my place. Let's go hang out there," you can say, "I like hanging out with you, but I don't think it's a good idea to be alone together."
- ✓ Instead of being together in a romantic way, hang out with friends or family. Or spend time together in public places.
- ✓ Avoid alcohol and other drugs. They make it harder to stick to your limits.

6. If your partner tries to talk you into it...

- ✓ Be very clear. Say, "I don't want to have sex."
- ✓ Your partner may say: "You would if you loved me." "But we're all alone. It's the perfect time." "I have needs too." These are all just lines – not reasons to have sex.
- ✓ Even if your partner doesn't share your reasons, he or she should respect your decision.

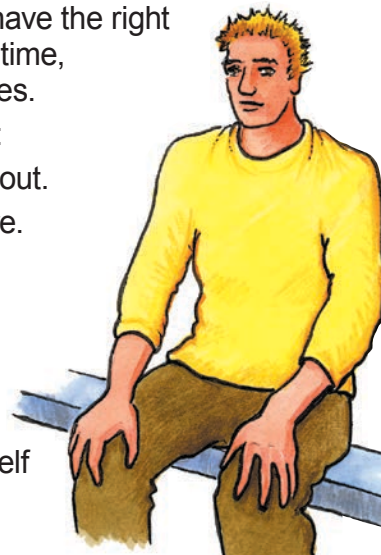
7. What if the pressure doesn't stop?

- ✓ Call it quits on the relationship. You deserve better.
- ✓ Your partner should care more about you than about sex.
- ✓ Choose to be in a relationship with someone who respects your decision.
- ✓ Don't let anyone pressure you into a sexual relationship that you don't want.



8. Remember, it's always OK to say no to sex.

- ✓ No matter what – you have the right to say no to sex at any time, under any circumstances.
- ✓ You can say no even if:
 - You've been making out.
 - You've had sex before.
 - Your partner really wants to.
 - You've been dating for a long time.
- ✓ Saying no to sex is about respecting yourself and your limits.



Talking about abstinence...

Choosing to be abstinent is a good way to protect your health. But if your partner wants to have sex when you don't, you will face the challenge of sticking to your limits under pressure. These tips will help you talk about sex and help you stick with your decision to be abstinent.

 **Sexual Health**
Talk About It!



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