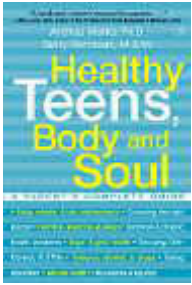


TALKING HEALTH AND SEX WITH YOUR TEEN, MADE EASY

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(HealthNewsDigest.com) - CROMWELL, CT, August 6 – Let’s be honest: talking health with your teen isn’t tops on your fun list (or theirs). Add in sex-related health issues, and it sinks even lower.

But talk, you must. “By far and away, the hardest part is getting the conversation started,” says Dr. Andrea Marks, past president of the Society for Adolescent Medicine, and author of *Healthy Teens, Body and Soul*. Dr. Marks has spent years refining effective ways to reach teens, and put them at ease when asking critical, sensitive questions. She offers sound advice to help parents break down the wall of silence -- here using urinary tract infections (UTIs) as an example -- developed with AZO, the number one, pharmacist-recommended urinary health brand.

“I tell parents to pick their moments. Rather than setting a specific time, find a time that feels right, and go from there. Have in mind an ‘opening line’, a bridge into the discussion, so you are confident at the start, whenever the time feels right,” says Dr. Marks.

“Give yourself a break, and know that you’re among a majority of parents if you’re not entirely comfortable talking about sex-related health topics, like urinary tract infections, with a teenage daughter,” she says. “But remember, this is part of your job. You simply cannot assume your child is getting all the important and correct information at school, from older siblings or friends, or from the web.”

“Do your best to be approachable and non-judgmental. When it comes to UTIs, you might start by asking if she has friends who have had one. You want her to confide in you,” says Dr. Marks. “Keep in mind common UTI symptoms, especially frequent urination, so if you notice this behavior in your daughter, you’ll speak up right away. Since only a doctor can prescribe an antibiotic that can cure a UTI, you’ll want to take action right away, to avoid the risk of a more serious kidney infection developing.”

When it comes to sensitive health-related matters like UTIs and your teens, Dr. Marks and AZO suggest:

- Broach it Broadly – Begin by talking to your child at a young age about general hygiene, especially hygiene of the genital area. Stress that it’s important to cleanse the genital area every day in the shower, and to wipe from front to back after going to the bathroom.
- Respect Her Maturity – a discussion about UTIs and their symptoms with your pre-teen or teen can be included in any chat about emerging sexuality, birth control, and sexually transmitted diseases. Make sure your daughter knows that she must always visit a doctor if she suspects something is wrong. When it comes to UTIs, be sure to stress that only a doctor can prescribe an antibiotic to cure the infection.
- Follow Her Lead – a UTI “first talk” can take place after your teen tells you she’s worried that she is urinating too often, that urination is painful, or that she has irritation in her genital area. If you suspect any of these symptoms, you can open the dialogue using your concern to bridge to the facts. Know what kinds of products can provide urinary pain relief so you can help her quickly, even before the doctor visit is arranged. “Widely-available, urinary-specific OTC pain relievers like AZO Standard® can work in as little as 20 minutes,” says Dr. Marks. In general, all-purpose pain relievers, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen, are not as effective treatments of UTI-specific pain,” Dr. Marks said.

Dr. Marks stresses that even after you've had the "big" conversation, you'll want to re-visit important, general points over time:

- Be in the Know - remind your child to always take her health seriously, and to be aware of any bodily changes that she may notice.
- Know the Facts – make sure your child knows the facts about her health. Also reiterate that it's always okay for her to come to you for any other health issues that may arise and that you will handle it together.
- Prevention – educate her on ways to prevent certain conditions; for example, urinating after intercourse, and if UTIs tend to recur by taking a cranberry supplement like AZO Cranberry® to maintain a healthy urinary tract,.

For more information about urinary tract infections and how to treat them, please visit <http://www.azoproducts.com/>

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