

# Feeling good!

*It's personal...*

Your questions answered by  
qualified sex therapist Clare O'Toole

**Q** I'm really keen to spice up my sex life and was thinking of trying phone sex, as I know it would really turn my boyfriend on and he works away a lot. I'm worried I will run out of things to say, or I'll say the wrong thing and ruin the mood! Any tips?

Robyn, 38

**A** I think this is a good idea as, when couples are apart a lot, it's important to keep all lines of communication open, including the sexual. You're already half way there as you know your boyfriend will love it, so now you need to relax as being anxious and timid won't work. Create the mood before phoning him. Dress sexily, and fantasise about what you'd like to be doing with him, because if you're turned on then you'll be sexy and find lots to say. He'll be involved too, so throw yourself into it and enjoy the challenge.



Ask our  
sexpert  
Clare

**Q** I've started using the dating app Tinder to meet guys, but I'm worried they'll just be after one thing. How can I make sure I'm not just used for sex?

Aoife, 19

**A** This is the chance you take with internet dating and sadly it's a common complaint as there are lots of dodgy characters out there. The Tinder app has also been criticised as being just for hooking up sexually, rather than for a relationship. Protect yourself by insisting on a few dates before sex and being direct about what you want. Always be safe, let a friend know where you're going, make it a public place, and take a phone. However, you might be better off with other dating sites.

**Q** My friend says you shouldn't sleep with men on the first date because you'll get a reputation. But I've done it before and until now hadn't thought it was anything to be ashamed of. Are there any rules?

Fiona, 24

**A** No, there are no rules. It's up to you who you sleep with, and when and how often. Unfortunately and unfairly, women are treated differently when it comes to sex. If men sleep around it's seen as normal and acceptable, but women get a bad reputation because they're seen as 'easy'. If you're happy with what you're doing then do it. If not, think about waiting until after a few dates before having sex.

*Am I normal?*

I suffer quite badly with yeast infections and despite using the usual over the counter creams and tablets, it clears up but it always comes back within weeks. What can I do to prevent it?

Charlotte, 39

Many people get what they think are recurrent yeast infections – which often improve with anti-fungal treatments – but have bacterial vaginosis (BV), which needs different treatment. Get tested by your GP or local sexual health clinic. Recurrent yeast infections can be a sign of diabetes, so you should get checked for this too. Wearing cotton underwear and loose fitting skirts or trousers helps. When washing the genital area, avoid perfumed hygiene products to stop irritation.

**Win!**  
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