

Healing

Sometimes the vagina (and hymen) or the penis or the anus (where the poop comes out) can be injured during sex. Some kids worry that they will have a life-long injury.

THE TRUTH is that kids rarely have injuries from sex or an assault. Even if there is an injury, these parts of the body heal very fast. Just like when you bite the inside of your cheek, the skin heals quickly; these body parts usually heal with no scars or permanent problems. Ralston House's doctor can look to make sure everything is healing well.

Sexual abuse should not change your body's ability to have a normal sex life as you get older. It should not prevent you from having children.

The most important part of healing after sexual abuse is to go to counseling. Counseling helps your thoughts and emotions to heal too.

Infections

Sometimes kids can get infections from sexual abuse. This is more likely when someone's mouth or private parts touch another person's private parts. The doctor can help you decide whether you need medicine for an infection.

Info You Can Trust

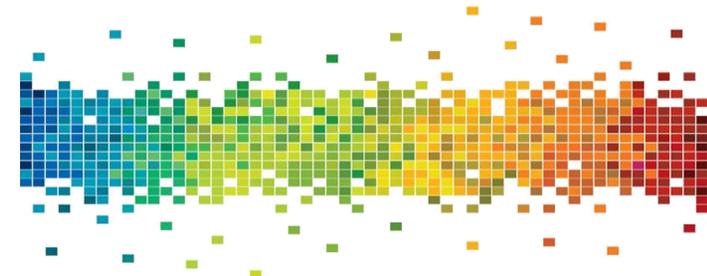
www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/teens
www.kidshealth.org/en/teens
www.amaze.org

See Our Doctor

If you would like to make an appointment to speak with our doctor, please call us at 720-898-6741.

www.RalstonHouse.org

Medical/Body Facts Brochure 12.19



BODY FACTS



Stop the Abuse
Start the Healing

Welcome to Ralston House! Did you know that we offer free medical exams? Our doctor works with kids and teens just like you because sometimes they have questions about their bodies and what is normal.

Whether or not you come here for an appointment, feel free to look through the information below.

Sexuality

After sexual abuse, especially by a person of the same sex, teens may wonder if they are gay. After sexual abuse, some kids wish they could change their gender.

These are normal thoughts to have, but **THE TRUTH** is that abuse does not change your sexuality. Your sexual orientation is about whether you are attracted to males, females, both, or neither.

Some kids wish they could change their sex or their gender.

Sometimes this is because of sexual abuse, and sometimes it is not. A counselor or therapist can help you talk about these thoughts and feelings.

The Hymen

The hymen is a stretchy, pink ring inside of a girl's vagina. A lot of people (teens and adults) think that the hymen "breaks" or the "cherry pops" or a girl is "opened" in this area the first time she has sex. This is not true.

THE TRUTH is that the hymen is open from the time a girl is born. The hymen is open so that when a girl starts her period, the blood can come out. If it's not open, the girl has to have surgery. Activities like using tampons, riding horses, and doing gymnastics do not injure the hymen.

Some girls have bleeding the first time they have sex. This is because the hymen gets stretched too quickly, and that causes a little injury that heals quickly. Most girls do not have bleeding.

Virginity

Different people have different ideas about virginity. Usually, when someone talks about being a "virgin," it means the person has not had sex.

THE TRUTH is that there is nothing that changes about your body the first time you have sex. That means that no one (not a doctor, not your parent, not a boyfriend or girlfriend) can know whether you have had sex by looking at your private parts.

Doctors believe that you "lose your virginity" when you decide to have sex. It doesn't count if someone touches you who shouldn't (like an adult or peer), or if someone forced you to have sex.

