



# CLEAN UP YOUR ACT

UNLIKE THE PHRASE 'GETTING DOWN AND DIRTY', HAVING SEX SHOULDN'T BE UNCLEAR IN ANY WAY. READ ON FOR TIPS ON HOW TO MAKE SURE YOUR NEXT STEAMY SESSION IS FULLY ENJOYABLE!

"Sex is a human need and necessity, but it is important to practise hygiene in our sexual habits. Poor sexual hygiene can lead to infection, which in turn can even lead to serious diseases," advises Dr Haslina Sarkawi, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist at Columbia Asia Hospital. Here are nine ways you can be safe rather than sorry.

## #1 GET SQUEAKY CLEAN

The first thing that comes to mind before and after having sex will be to take a shower. According to a research by the University of California, USA, women should avoid using products that are not meant for internal use to clean their vagina as this can cause damage to sensitive tissues, causing them to be more prone to sexually transmitted infections such as herpes and chlamydia. Instead, warm water and non-scented feminine washes work best.



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## #2 STAY PROTECTED

Thanks to modern innovations, we have a wide array of contraceptions to choose from – condoms, cervical caps, diaphragms, spermicides, etc. Be honest, a condom will probably be your last option as most of the time, it doesn't give you the pleasure you intend to get from your session. But Dr Haslina says it is your best option to prevent infections.

## #3 CLEAR THAT JUNGLE

Another problem that pops up when you don't have your pubic hair removed (for both guys and girls) is the infestation of pubic hair lice. So have it well-trimmed and remove those pesky hairs before doing the deed.

## #4 BRUSH YOUR TEETH

Morning breath can be a killer but to avoid the hassle of a trip to the bathroom, we block this out and get straight down to 'work'. But when it comes to oral hygiene, Dr Haslina encourages couples to brush their teeth and gargle with mouthwash before and after sex. This will help ensure that your mouth stays clean and free from bacteria.



### TIP!

Get your waxing done at least a day or two before having intercourse as the area is sensitive when hair is removed and can cause irritation.

## #5 USE FRESH LINEN

Admit it: having to change the sheets would be the last thing on your mind, especially if you're already in the 'mood' and raring to go. According to an article published on [independent.co.uk](http://independent.co.uk), the average amount of dust mites living on bedsheets is 10 million. Now, imagine having a steamy session on this same bedsheet! To prevent infection, have your sheets changed on a weekly basis.

## #6 WASH THOSE DIGITS

We all want a bit of fun and one of the ways is by using our fingers, right? But before doing so, be sure to wash them thoroughly and clean your nails with a good antibacterial soap. "This will prevent the spread of bacteria to your nether regions and that of your partner's too; to be extra safe, use a hand sanitiser as well," says Dr Haslina.

## #7 WEAR CLEAN UNDIES

Give us the option of choosing between nylon, lycra, satin or cotton panties and we'll all go for the prettiest first, which might not be cotton. But did you know that cotton panties are the most comfortable ones as they reduce the effects of itching, odours and infections? Comfy panties will also ensure that your private parts are clean and hygienic at the same time.

## #8 SAY NO WHEN ON THE FLOW

As tempted as you are, refrain from sex during your period. For obvious reasons, having sex at such times can get messy and is unhygienic to boot. (Picture this: stains and leakage all over your clean white sheets!). Dr Haslina adds, "Furthermore, during your menstrual cycle, you should change your tampon or sanitary pad every three to six hours, depending on your menstrual flow. Leaving a stale tampon or sanitary pad on for a long period encourages bacterial growth, causing infection and bad odour."

## #9 ALWAYS USE THE LOO

Tempted to hold it in before sex? Dr Haslina strongly advises against it! "Never hold the urge to urinate before having sex. Urinating helps the bladder get rid of bacteria and toxins in the urinary tract. Delaying urination speeds up the breeding of bacteria, which may lead to urinary tract infection," she explains. For good measure, go to the loo after having sex too.

