

Top 10 Safe Sex Standards for Polyamory, Swinging and Open Relationships & Group Sex

Posted on May 28, 2013 by Kamala Devi

One of the greatest objections to polyamory, swinging and open relationships is that it is not sexually safe. Naturally, the biggest concern is that the more partners you have, the more you increase your risk of sexually transmitted infections (STI's). Granted, with each additional partner, safe sex becomes more complex. But it is important to note that people in every type of relationship style often make stupid sexual decisions, including single, polyamorous, swinging, open and even married people.

I blame most unsafe sex practices on lack of clear communication about sex. The predominant culture is so negative towards sex, that STI's and unplanned pregnancy are surrounded by shame, ignorance and silence. In contrast, the premise of polyamory is open and honest communication, and when applied to sex, communication should be increased. In fact, in matters of safe sex, I recommend people over-communicate.

Following are my Top ten considerations when practicing safe sex in Polyamory or with multiple lovers:

1. Suit Yourself.

Everyone has to decide for themselves what their own safe sex standards will be. People have very different perspectives on the risk to reward ratio when it comes to sex. Some people feel condoms are sufficient protection, even though barriers don't protect from STI's that are spread by skin contact around the condom, (some of which have no visible symptoms.) In contrast, some people will not have sex unless their potential partners are tested and clear of everything. Ultimately, the objective is to dramatically increase informed consent while dramatically decreasing exposure to potential STI's.

2. Talk about safe sex.

Before engaging in any sexual activity that involves the genitals, I stay pre-informed about my STI exposure. I talk about sexual histories, by asking: how sexually active they are? When were they last tested? For what and what were the results? Who are they fluid bonded with? Do they have any STI's? Or what recent exposure might they have had? Before re-connecting sexually with an old lover, I ask for an update on any new sexual risks they've taken since last we had sex and I update them on my own activity. I only have sex with people who you know to be honest.

3. Consider the Whole.

I consider myself responsible for the sexual health of everyone I am sleeping with. We do not want to be passing it back and forth within the group. Every time I encounter an STD I consider the time, energy, testing, treatments, doctors expenses, emotional process, mental concern and loss of trust in the group. Remember It may takes several months to a year for the whole pod to clear a sexual infection.

Source:

http://www.kamaladevi.com/2125/safe_sex_for_polyamory_open-relationship#.VE6zkiLF_MC

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4. Check it out.

I visually examine my own and partners genitals before engaging in sex. I am experienced in distinguishing between infected hair follicles, razor burn, genital warts, herpes, and/or other spots. If I am in question, I play it safe.

5. Latex is Sexy.

I only fluid bond with one partner and use condoms for all other penetrative sex, covering the cock before it touches the wet tissue of the pussy, to reduce any unintentional fluid exchange. (I merge with the barrier, seeing it as a blessing and don't let anyone give me grief about it.) I use gloves and dental dams for non regular partners such as clients or participants at play parties. (When wearing gloves or dams remember: Sexy is in the hands of the beholder!)

6. Juicy Details.

My partners and I practice washing hands, genitals and mouth before and after sex. We use organic water based lube with all latex barriers. (Condoms tend to dry the yoni and sex without lube can leave micro tears in soft tissue.) We use condoms even when we are using dildos, strap ons, and butt plugs. When playing in group sex situations, we are careful not to cross pollinate by washing hands between touching genitals of people who are not fluid bonded. And to avoid bladder or yeast infections, we are extra careful not to go from anal to vaginal play without first washing with soap and hot water.

7. Get Tested.

I go to the STD clinic with my regular lovers to get tested every three to six months. I make a special request for the nurse to check my throat and anus. I get annual pap smears and HPV test.

8. Full Disclosure.

If I am accidentally exposed to an STI, or get a positive test result, I communicate clearly and fully with everyone I have slept with since the exposure or my last clear test and ask for all my partners to do the same—ASAP. (This is often also a deep personal growth opportunity. I take responsibility and ask myself: how did I co-create this? and what can we do differently next time?) I recommend people even keep a log of who they make love with in case they have to look back and notify lovers of any STIs.

9. Birth Control.

My partners all know that I am having sex for pleasure and not procreation. I am not looking to carry another child. If another woman in my poly family wants to get pregnant, that is her choice. If my partners are involved in an unplanned pregnancy, I would support the woman in either raising another family member, or getting an abortion. It is her choice whether she wants to do paternity testing and/or to negotiate the responsibility, custody and costs of raising a child with anyone in my family. I will not object to another woman's right to life or birth control.

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10. Be Proactive.

I stay educated about new developments in sexual health and advocate for an ongoing open conversation about safe sex in the polyamory and swinging communities. (For newest information about safer sex, which is constantly being updated as health research and testing technology advance, I recommend the <http://www.cdc.gov/std/>) Also, I keep my immune system high and reduce my viral load by taking extra Zinc and Lysine and other natural anti-viral supplements. Finally, I practice compassion, forgiveness and sensitivity when discussing safer sex. I am not perfect at this topic, and this can be very ego-confronting conversation.

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