

If you'd like to know more about STDs, pick up some more information from your local family planning clinic or search these websites:

- Advocates for Youth:
www.advocatesforyouth.org
- Reproductive Health Online:
www.reproline.jhu.edu
- The Men's Health Network:
www.menshealthnetwork.org
- WebMD: www.webmd.com



Family Planning
Council of Iowa
108 – 3rd Street Suite 220
Des Moines, IA 50309
515-288-9028
Fax: 515-288-4048
www.fpcouncil.com
e-mail: fpci@fpcouncil.com

Funded by the U.S. Department of
Health & Human Services

Written in 2003 by Tom Klaus for the
Family Planning Council of Iowa

Avoiding the Big “Uh-Oh!”

**Guys Do
Make a Difference in
Family Planning**

“Uh-Oh!”

isn't usually good to hear from your sexual partner.

Especially during sex, followed by something like “I can't remember if I took my Pill.” Your partner doesn't want to hear “Uh-Oh!” as you feel the condom slip off during intercourse or when you realize you really can't pull out in time – despite your best efforts and promises.

Family planning is all about taking the “Uh-Oh!” out of sexual relationships, whether it's an unplanned pregnancy or an STD. It's natural and normal for all human beings to feel sexual and want to be sexually intimate with another person. As you know, that sexual intimacy can lead to pregnancy. You and your partner don't have much control over the biology that produces pregnancy. But you can control when that pregnancy occurs.

Family planning has been often left to the female partner in heterosexual relationships. Not any more. It's a new day with new opportunities and guys have to take responsibility. Why? Because family planning doesn't really work well without your help.

Make An Investment

Really, family planning won't work very well unless you are willing to invest in making it work. Becoming invested in family planning means two things.

Give A Rip! “If she doesn't want to get pregnant, she knows what to do”, some guys will say. Others show even less concern, saying: “That's her problem. She knew it could happen now she'll just have to deal with it.” Your partner wants to know that you do give a rip – about her, about doing the right thing, about working with her to prevent unplanned pregnancy.

Do Your Job. Your job in family planning is to work actively with your partner to help avoid the “Uh-Oh!” But how?

Answer the Big Questions

Family planning is all about timing and making responsible decisions about your sexual health, whether you're in a serious relationship or not. Here are some important questions you need to ask yourself:

Do I want kids and the responsibility that comes with them? Come on. Be honest. Don't just assume your answer. Not everyone really wants children or feels up to the job. Unless you're ready for both the privilege and responsibility, pass. Anything less isn't fair to a child. If you father a child, you'll be responsible for him/her for the next 18 years.

What about STDs and HIV? Some birth control methods, such as condoms, can also help to prevent STDs and HIV. Other birth control methods do not protect against STDs/HIV. Protect yourself and prevent an unplanned pregnancy.

What do I need to do? The method you select depends on whether you are choosing to abstain from sex, delaying having children, and protecting yourself against sexually transmitted diseases? You decide.

These really are big questions. They need to be answered but the answers are only as good as your willingness to take the final step and follow through.

Follow Through

This is where the “men” really are separated from the “boys”. Your job is only partly done. Your job is not finished until you make good on the decisions you made above. This is show time. The talk is over and it is time for action.

You follow through when you actually use the prevention methods you identified and agreed to use. Remember, the methods are only as good as how you use them.

Use them correctly.

This means use the right method in the right way. Know what method is for you and how to use it. Talk to a professional. If you have a personal doctor, begin there or go to your local family planning clinic. Learn what pregnancy prevention method will work best for you and how to use it effectively.

Use them consistently.

This means to use it every time, all the time. Not just sometimes, or when you feel like it, or when it is convenient. Every time, all the time.

That brings us back to making an investment. All the best planning in the world won't help you avoid the “Uh-Oh!” if you aren't willing to communicate with your partner.

Thanks for thinking about this.

Good luck in keeping the

“Uh-Oh!” out of your sex life.