

# SEXtalk)))

Answers to Your Questions about Sex and Relationships

Have a ??? Email [sextalk@u.arizona.edu](mailto:sextalk@u.arizona.edu)

## factoid

**Of the 41% of US college students who reported ever faking an orgasm, 61% of those were women  
(Details Magazine College Sex Survey, 1997)**

- Q. My period has always been pretty irregular - I usually can't predict when its coming. It has never really been a concern of mine until I came here. Since I have been here (August 15), I have not really had a period (I had a light one the second week, but it only lasted a day). I have not been sexually active and don't plan on being sexually active for a while, but my irregular period worries me. Is this normal? Should I be concerned? Should I go on the birth control pill so that my period becomes regular?**
- A.** The amount of concern you should have depends upon whether you have yet had a normal period. Oligomenorrhea occurs when the interval between a woman's menses exceeds 35 days. This is a fairly common condition in young women and not of great concern. If menses is delayed for 3 or more months, the condition could be reclassified as secondary amenorrhea, a condition of greater concern due to prolonged disruption of the menstrual cycle.

A number of factors can contribute to oligomenorrhea or amenorrhea - significant weight gain or weight loss, high stress levels, extreme exercise, certain medications and, in some circumstances, medical problems such as hypothyroidism and liver dysfunction. Amenorrhea occurs naturally in women who are pregnant or breast-feeding, and oligomenorrhea and amenorrhea are common in women who have just begun menstruating or are approaching menopause.

Since you are not sexually active, your delayed period is probably not due to pregnancy - otherwise, the first recommendation would be to take a pregnancy test. Given that it is now December, if you still have not had a normal period, it is recommended that you visit a health care provider in order to determine the cause. Providers at the Womens' Health Clinic at Campus Health are available for such visits. If your condition is oligomenorrhea and is not caused by any medical problems, the birth control pill would be a viable option of treatment for you. If you're interested in scheduling an appointment at the Womens' Health Clinic, call 621-6512.

*References: Hatcher et al (1998), Contraceptive Technology. Crooks & Baur (2002), Our Sexuality.*

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