

Masturbation: Questions for ChildLine

Q: Is masturbating bad because I feel like I'm the only person who does it. Also, I feel a bit weird saying this, but is it the same feeling you get when you have sex?

A:

Hi there,

I get a lot of letters from young people who are worried about masturbation. The first thing to know is that it's okay to want to do it and it's also okay if you don't.

Masturbation is not bad or wrong and is completely normal for anyone to do it, no matter what age, gender, sexuality or cultural background they come from. Masturbation is something most people do around the time they reach puberty. Changes in our body start to give us sexual urges and masturbation is a completely normal and safe way to explore those urges.

Masturbation should be a private thing you do, so it's not really anybody else's business, but you're certainly not the only person who does it.

As for how it feels, this is something that only you can really decide for yourself. Both masturbation and sex will feel different for everybody. Some people might like masturbation but not sex - others will like both, or neither. It really is going to be something you will discover when you are ready and in your own time.

If you want to ask any more questions then get in touch with us.

I hope that helps, thanks for the message.
Sam

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Q: Is it normal for girls to masturbate at this age? (15+) Is it very common? Because guys make it pretty obvious that they do, but girls seem very against it. Is this just embarrassment or do girls just not do this?

A:

Hi there,

It's good to hear from you I'm glad you've got in touch. I can hear how this is something that is on your mind at the moment and had made you a bit worried. I want to let you know that it's perfectly normal for both girls and boys to masturbate. Sometimes people find the topic of masturbation embarrassing and this might lead people to shy to talk about it.

Lots of people ask me a about different rumours they hear about masturbation and I want let you know that masturbating is something that is common and it natural part of getting to know your own body. Masturbation won't cause any mental or physical harm and even if you masturbate often it will not affect your sex life or cause any problems that other people may have told you about.

This is a question that comes up lots of on the ChildLine message boards on the Sex and Relationships section in the ChildLine website. It might be help for you to have a look and to see what other young people and girls have to say about it.

Sex and masturbation can sometimes be confusing if you wanted to talk more about these things you can speak to a ChildLine counsellor. A ChildLine counsellor is also someone you could talk over you feeling with. They don't judge and would be able to keep what you've said to me confidential.

I hope that helps, thanks for the message.
Sam

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Q: Hi Sam, I was wondering, is it normal to Masturbate? I do it once around every 2 or 3 days and I always end up feeling really guilty and anxious about it afterwards, so I was wondering if it's okay to masturbate? Thanks

A:

Hi there,

It's completely normal for anyone of any age or gender to masturbate. Masturbation can be a normal part of a healthy sex life, even before someone becomes sexually active. There's no need to feel any guilt or shame. You should feel free to do it as much, or as little, as you feel like.

Masturbation is something many people start to do around the time they reach puberty. Changes in our body start to give us sexual urges and masturbation is a completely natural and safe way to explore those urges. You should never feel ashamed of your body or what you do with it.

For some people masturbation can become a bit addictive and it can start to take over their everyday life. Although it shouldn't harm you physically, it can start to disrupt your life if you're choosing to do it over other things, like homework or seeing friends. This is the same for anything that's addictive though and so it's important to keep checking that you are feeling okay with the amount you are masturbating.

If you feel comfortable with it and don't feel as though it's stopping you doing other things, then you should feel free to do it as often as you need. The only things to remember are to keep it private - don't do it anywhere public or around other people - and if you start to feel the need to involve other things like porn, maybe you could talk to one of our counsellors first so that we can help you to stay safe.

I hope that helps, thanks for the message.
Sam