

base so that it can be gripped and removed easily. Putting condoms on toys can help keep them clean.

- Using drugs and/or alcohol can make it harder to make informed choices and to pay attention to how you and your body are responding to anal play.
- **Pregnancy:** anal play doesn't put you at risk of pregnancy unless there is ejaculate (cum) near or around the vaginal opening.
- **STIs:** anal play can pass on sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Using condoms on sex toys and penises, gloves on hands and dental dams (or condoms cut up one side) for oral sex can reduce your risk.
- **Protecting the vagina:** don't put a toy or body part into anyone's vagina that has been used in anyone's butt without washing it with soap and water and/or putting a new condom on it first. Moving bacteria from the butt into the vagina can cause an infection.

#### For more information

- It can be difficult to find reliable, health-based information about anal play online. For more information, check out the books 'The Ultimate Guide to Anal Sex for Women' (Tristan Taormino) or 'Anal Pleasure and Health: A Guide for Men and Women' (Jack Morrison).

#### For youth ages 13-29

##### Planned Parenthood Toronto Health Services

Offers drop-in and scheduled appointments  
Call 416-961-0113 or visit [www.ppt.on.ca](http://www.ppt.on.ca)

#### For youth ages 13-19

##### Teen Health Source

Offers anonymous and confidential sexual health information for teens by teens.  
Text (647) 933-5399, call (416) 961-3200, email [teenhealthsource@ppt.on.ca](mailto:teenhealthsource@ppt.on.ca)  
Chat online and visit [www.teenhealthsource.com](http://www.teenhealthsource.com)

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## sexual pleasure series

# anal play 101

### What is anal play?

Anal play is any kind of sexual activity that involves your butt. This can include:

- Putting fingers around/inside someone's butt
- Putting a tongue around/inside someone's butt (rimming)
- Putting a penis\* inside someone's butt
- Putting a dildo or other sex toy inside someone's butt
- Putting a hand inside someone's butt (fisting)

### Facts about anal play

***ANYONE can give, receive and enjoy anal play.***

Anyone of any gender or sexual orientation can enjoy anal play, on their own or with a partner(s), as long as it is done safely and with everyone's consent. Not everyone is interested in it and that's okay too.

***Anal play is healthy and normal and can feel good.***

Many of us are taught that anal play is wrong and that your anus wasn't designed for sexual purposes. Anal play does not have to hurt. There are thousands of sensitive nerve endings in and around your butt and it can be very pleasurable.

***Anal play doesn't have to be messy.***

Some people like to bathe before anal play to clean the anal area, but no extraordinary measures are necessary to engage in anal play. Some people prefer to put down a towel or plastic sheet before play starts and/or have wipes nearby just in case.

\*We know that these aren't the words everyone uses for their bodies (eg. trans folks), and support you using the language that feels best for you.

## Anatomy of your butt



- **Perineum:** the area between the anus and either the scrotum (balls) or the opening of the vagina\*. It is often a pleasurable place to be touched.
- **Anus:** the opening of your butt, made of soft, wrinkled tissue. This tissue is very sensitive and responds to touch and stimulation. Most people have hair surrounding their anus. Some people choose to remove it and some people don't.
- **Sphincter muscles:** the muscles just inside your butt that surround the anus. There is an external sphincter and an internal one. These are the muscles that relax or contract to allow things to move in and out of your butt.
- **Anal canal:** this canal runs 1-2 inches long into the rectum. It can also be very responsive to touch and the tissue becomes engorged when you are aroused. If you (and your sphincter muscles) are relaxed, the canal can expand.
- **Rectum:** beyond the anal canal, the rectum is about 5 inches of soft, smooth tissue that can expand a lot. Feces is not stored here. When your body is ready for a bowel movement, feces moves into the rectum, then the anal canal and out the anus. This leaves only trace amounts of feces in the anal canal
- **Prostate:** a gland in people with testicles\*\* that produces semen. Technically, it is not inside the butt; it's actually below the bladder. However, it can be felt through the anal canal and stimulated through anal play. This can be very pleasurable.

\*\*People with testicles are usually designated male at birth. People with testicles don't always identify as male.

## Preparation and tips

- **Happy and healthy butt:** getting lots of fibre in your diet and drinking enough water helps keep your rectum healthy.
- Washing the anus area with soap and water regularly removes traces of feces left after wiping after a bowel movement.
- Anal play does NOT cause conditions like recurring constipation, diarrhea or hemorrhoids, but if you already have these conditions, you may want to avoid anal play until your butt is feeling better.
- To avoid small tears and cuts, ensure your nails are short and smoothed with a nail file/emery board and/or wear a latex or nitrile glove.
- **Empty bowels:** having a bowel movement before anal play can make it more comfortable.
- **Enemas (a.k.a. Douching):** some people like to squirt water or saline up their butts to clean them out. You can purchase enema kits at pharmacies or sex shops. Using enemas too often or using harsh chemicals can irritate the tissue and make it more prone to tearing. If you are going to douche leave enough time to push out all the water prior to sex.
- **Talk about it:** before you start, make sure you and your partner(s) agree on what things you will and will not try. During anal play, talk about what feels good and what doesn't.
- **Start on the outside:** relax the area by touching near and around the outside of the anus with toys or fingers before going inside the butt. If and when you are ready to try something inside, start with small toys or body parts until you and your partner(s) feel ready moving to something bigger.
- **Take your time:** feeling relaxed, breathing and being patient are key to enjoying anal play. If you are feeling stressed out, you may want to save anal play for another time.
- **Lube:** the anus doesn't naturally get wet, so have lots of lubricants on hand. Keep in mind that oil-based lubricants can break down latex condoms and silicone-based lubricants don't work well with silicone toys. Use lots of lube and re-apply often. Using a specially designed lube syringe to get more lube on the inside of the anal canal reduces the chances of the condom breaking and makes anal penetration more pleasurable.
- **Toys:** some people like to use toys for anal play. Make sure anything you put in your butt or someone else's is: smooth, unbreakable, flexible, clean, comfortable in size and has a flared