

## VOCABULARY

This is a list of words used in this book that may be new to you, with an explanation for each one. Knowing what these words mean will help you use this book.

Words explained in this list are written in *slanted letters* the first time they are used in a chapter. Some explanations in this list also contain words written in *slanted letters*, because explanations for those words are also in this list.

Words are listed in the order of the alphabet:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

### A

**abdomen** The part of the body that contains the *stomach, liver, guts* and *reproductive organs*. The belly.

**abortion** When a person ends a pregnancy on purpose.

**abscess** A raised, red, painful lump on the skin that is filled with *pus* (for example, a boil).

**abuse** When someone hurts another person's body (physical abuse), humiliates or insults a person (emotional abuse) or makes a person do sexual things against her will (sexual abuse).

**access (to health services)** When health services are available, and someone has the freedom, the money, and the time to use them.

**accompanier** Someone who provides health information and emotional, practical, or physical support to people, most notably people having *abortions*.

**acute** When something happens suddenly, lasts for a short time, and is usually serious or strong—for example, acute pain or acute infection. Compare with *chronic*.

**addiction** When the body feels a strong need for alcohol or another *drug*.

**afterbirth** See *placenta*.

**AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome)** The serious stage of illness that develops for someone with *HIV* if they are not treated with *antiretroviral* medicines (*ART*). Also called advanced *HIV* disease.

**allergy, allergic reaction, allergic shock** A problem—such as itching, sneezing, *hives* or rash, and sometimes difficult breathing

or shock—that affects some people when specific things are breathed in, eaten, *injected*, or touched. Allergic *shock* is a severe form of allergic reaction.

**anal sex** When a *penis*, mouth, fingers, or objects touch or are inside the *anus*.

**anemia** A condition in which the blood lacks red blood *cells*. This makes it harder for the blood to carry nutrients through the body.

**anesthesia** General anesthesia is when you are given medicine to make you sleep during an *operation* so you will not feel pain. Local anesthesia is given as an injection to numb or block pain only in one part of the body.

**antacid** Medicines to lessen *stomach* acid and calm stomach upset. See *heartburn*.

**antibiotic** Medicine used to fight *infection* caused by *bacteria*.

**antibodies** Substances the body makes to fight *infection*.

**antiretroviral therapy (ART)** A combination of 3 or more *antiretroviral* medicines taken regularly, often every day, to treat and manage *HIV*.

**antiretrovirals** Medicines that can control *HIV* (but not cure it), making people with *HIV* able to stay healthy and live much longer.

**anus** The opening of the *intestine* where waste (*stool*) leaves the body. The buttole.

**anxiety** Feeling nervous or worried.

**appendicitis** An infection causing swelling of the *appendix*. If the appendix bursts, it can be deadly.

**appendix** A worm-like sac attached to the large *intestine*.

**areola** The dark, bumpy area around the *nipple*.

**artery** A thin, tube-like carrier of blood away from the heart, through the body. Arteries have a *pulse*. Also called a blood vessel. Compare with *vein*.

**arthritis** Pain and swelling in the *joints*.

**asthma** A disease of the lungs, which causes attacks of difficult breathing, often with a hissing or wheezing sound when breathing out.

## B

**bacteria** One kind of *germ* which causes many different *infectious* diseases. Bacteria are too small to see without a *microscope*.

**bacterial vaginosis** An *infection* of the *vagina* caused by *bacteria*, not spread by sex.

**bag of waters** The sac (or amniotic sac) inside the *womb* that holds the baby. When the sac breaks and releases fluid, this usually means that *labor* has begun.

**balls** See *testicles*.

**barrier methods (of family planning)** Methods of preventing pregnancy that stop the *sperm* from reaching the egg.

**bile** A liquid in the *gallbladder* that helps digest fatty foods.

**biopsy** When a piece of *tissue* or fluid is taken from somewhere on or in the body and examined to see if it is healthy or diseased.

**birth canal** See *vagina*.

**birth control** See *family planning*.

**birth control pills** A *hormonal method* of *family planning*.

**bladder** The organ in the *abdomen* that stores *urine*. It gets bigger as it fills with urine, and gets small after you pass urine.

**blood clots** Soft, dark red, shiny lumps in the blood.

**blood pressure** The force or pressure of the blood upon the walls of the blood vessels (*arteries* and *veins*). Blood pressure varies with the age and health of the person.

**blood transfusion** When one person's blood is given to another person. It is slowly *injected* in a *vein* with a special needle to replace blood the person may have lost.

**blurred eyesight** When the eyes cannot see things clearly.

**bowels** See *intestines*.

**brand name medicine** The marketing name a company gives to a medicine they make. Compare with *generic medicine*.

**breast exam** Checking the breasts for lumps that might be a sign of *cancer*.

**breast infection (mastitis)** An *infection* in the breast that can be very painful. It may make it difficult for a baby to suck the *nipple*.

**breech** When a baby is born feet or buttocks first, instead of head first. This can be dangerous for the baby.

**bronchitis** An *infection* of the large breathing tubes in the lungs.

## C

**caffeine** A *drug* found in coffee, tea, and cola drinks that causes the heart to beat faster and makes a person feel more awake.

**calcium** A *mineral* found in some foods that helps make bones and teeth strong.

**cancer** A disease causing *cells* to grow too fast. There are many kinds of cancers; some spread more quickly and are more dangerous than others.

**cannula** A small tube used with a *syringe* to suction out the contents of the *womb*.

**cassava (manioc root)** A starchy root grown as a food crop.

**CD4 count** This blood test measures how well a person's *immune system* is working.

**cell** The smallest unit of living matter in the body. Our bodies are made of trillions of cells of different types (skin cells, blood cells, and others). Looking at cells with a *microscope* can find problems in the part of the body the cells come from.

**cervix** The opening of the *womb* into the *vagina*.

**Cesarean section (c-section)** When it is dangerous or impossible for a baby to be born through the *vagina*, the *abdomen* is cut open to take the baby out during this *operation*.

**chemicals** The substances that make up all living and nonliving things. How chemicals affect health is often understood if they have been in the world a long time. But for many newer manufactured chemicals, less is known. Some, such as medicines, are proven to be helpful and safe. Others, like some cleaners, *pesticides*, and pollution, are proven to harm health.

**child spacing** Having children at least 2 years apart so a person's body has time to get strong again between pregnancies.

**chlorine solution** A *chemical* liquid that can be used to kill *germs*. Also known as bleach.

**cholera** A serious *infectious disease* with severe *vomiting* and bloody *diarrhea*.

**chronic** Something that lasts for a long time, or that occurs often. Compare with *acute*.

**circulation** How blood flows through the *arteries* and *veins* in the body.

**circumcision (of a penis)** When the loose fold of skin at the end of a *penis* (the foreskin) is cut off.

**circumcision (female genital cutting)** When part or all of the *vulva* is cut off. It is sometimes called "excision." Also see *infibulation*.

**cleft lip** An opening or gap on a baby's upper lip, often connecting to the nostril.

**cleft palate** A split or abnormal opening in the roof of the mouth.

**climax** When the body reaches its peak of sexual pleasure. Also called *orgasm*.

**clitoris** The part of the *vulva* most sensitive to touch.

**clots** See *blood clots*.

**cognitive delay** When a child takes longer to develop their mental skills compared to other children their age.

**cold sores** See *herpes*.

**colostrum** The yellow-colored milk that comes from the breasts for the first 2 or 3 days after birth. It is very healthy for the baby and protects against disease.

**community health workers** Health workers who are members of the community they are helping. They often have special training and other experience to handle specific health problems.

**complications** Problems or things that go wrong, often needing more health care.

**compost** A mixture of plant and animal waste that is allowed to rot for use as a fertilizer. Hay, dead leaves, vegetable waste, animal droppings, and manure all make good compost.

**compress** A folded cloth or pad that is put on a part of the body. The compress may be soaked in hot or cold liquid.

**condom (rubber)** See *external (male) condom* and *internal (female) condom*.

**consent** When people willingly and freely agree to participate in sexual activity. It cannot be given by people who are too young, or are *unconscious* or asleep, or have had so much alcohol or drugs it affects their decisions.

**constipation** When a person has a difficult time passing *stool*.

**contagious** An illness that can spread from one person to another.

**contaminated** When medical supplies, food, or water contain harmful *germs* or *toxic* substances.

**contraception (birth control)** See *family planning*.

**contractions (pains, labor pains)** When the *womb* squeezes and becomes hard. Contractions open the *cervix* and push the baby out of the womb.

**convulsion** When all or part of a person's body, especially arms and legs, is shaking or jerking uncontrollably. Convulsions may be a sign of *seizures*, *epilepsy*, *eclampsia*, or poisoning.

**cord (umbilical cord)** How the baby is connected from its navel (belly button) to the *placenta*.

**counsel, counseling** When a trained person helps you think about your situation or decisions you must make. For example, some people are trained especially to help people cope with *HIV*.

**counting days method** A *family planning* method in which someone counts the days of their menstrual cycle to find their fertile time, during which they avoid unprotected penis-in-vagina sex.

**cramps** A painful tightening of a muscle. Cramps are very common during menstrual periods and often start just before a period begins.

**cryotherapy** A treatment that freezes and destroys abnormal tissue on the *cervix*.

**cyst** A sac-like growth inside the body that is often filled with fluid. It is not a form of *cancer* and most cysts have no signs.

## D

**date rape** When someone is forced to have sex by a person they are seeing socially.

**dehydration** When the body loses more liquid than it takes in.

**dementia** A condition where a person has severe difficulty remembering things and thinking clearly.

**dengue fever** A serious illness caused by a *virus* spread by mosquitoes.

**depression** When a person loses interest in doing things, feels tired, and has a hard time concentrating and making decisions. Serious depression may lead to suicide.

**diabetes** When a person's body cannot use *sugars* in the blood. Instead of giving energy, sugar builds up and damages the body.

**diaphragm** A *family planning* method in which a soft rubber or silicone cup, usually filled with *spermicide*, is worn over the *cervix* during sex.

**diarrhea** Passing 3 or more loose, watery *stools* in a day.

**digestion** When food is broken down by the *stomach* and *intestines* to be used by the body or to pass out of the body as waste.

**disability** When a person has a condition of the body or mind that makes it difficult for them to do certain activities of daily living.

**discharge** Wetness or fluids from a part of the body. In the *vagina*, discharge that is clear, milky or slightly yellow is normal. Discharge that has a bad smell or itches may be a sign of a *sexually transmitted infection*.

**discrimination** When a person or a group of people are treated badly or unfairly because they are different than others (for example, because their skin is a certain color, or they are female, old, young, or poor).

**disinfection** Cleaning tools and equipment to get rid of nearly all the *germs*.

**divorce** To legally end a marriage.

**dizziness** Feeling lightheaded or unsteady.

**dose** The amount of a medicine you should take at one time.

**douche** Washing out the *vagina*. This can irritate the vagina and make a person more likely to have yeast and other vaginal infections.

**drugs** Substances that affect a person's mind and body, altering their mood, feelings, and behavior. Common drugs are alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and cocaine, among others.

**dysentery** *Diarrhea* with mucus or blood in it, usually caused by an *infection*.

## E

**eclampsia** When high *blood pressure* during pregnancy causes a person to have one or more *seizures* with *convulsions*.

**ectopic pregnancy** A pregnancy that grows outside the *womb*. Most ectopic pregnancies happen in one of the *fallopian tubes* (see *tubal pregnancy*).

**ejaculate** When *semen* comes out of the *penis*, usually during sex.

**embryo** A fertilized egg is called an embryo between the second and eighth week after fertilization.

**enema** A solution of water put up the *anus* to make a person pass *stool* or to give fluids.

**epilepsy** A brain condition that causes a person to have *seizures* without a known cause. Other causes for seizures are brain injury, *tumors*, and *infection*.

**erection** When the *penis* gets hard, often because of sexual excitement.

**esophagus** A tube that connects the mouth and the *stomach* through which food goes down.

**estrogen** A *hormone* made by the *ovaries* that causes many changes during *puberty* and controls the *menstrual cycle*. It is also used in many *hormonal methods of family planning*.

**examination (exam)** When a health worker, nurse, or doctor looks at, listens to, or feels parts of the body to find out what is wrong.

**exhaustion** Extreme tiredness.

**external (male) condom** A close-fitting bag worn on the *penis* during sex to collect *semen*. This prevents pregnancy and the spread of *sexually transmitted infections* including *HIV*. Most are made of *latex* but other materials may be used.

## F

**fainting** See *loss of consciousness*.

**fallen womb** See *prolapsed uterus*.

**fallopian tubes** Tubes that go from the *ovaries* to the *womb*. When the ovary releases an egg, it travels down one of these tubes to the womb.

**family planning** When people use methods to prevent pregnancy so they can plan when to have children.

**fats** Foods, like oils and butter, that give the body energy.

**female condom** See *internal (female) condom*.

**fertile time** The time in the *menstrual cycle* when someone can get pregnant. This time usually starts on about the 8th day of the cycle and lasts for about 11 days.

**Fertility Awareness Methods** *Family planning* methods that teach someone how to know their *fertile time*, so they can avoid unprotected penis-in-vagina sex then.

**fertilization** When an egg and *sperm* join to begin making a baby.

**fertilizer** A material used to make land be able to grow more crops.

**fetoscope** A tool for listening to the heartbeat of the baby inside the *womb*.

**fetus** A developing baby is called a fetus from 9 weeks after *fertilization* until birth.

**fever** When the body *temperature* is higher than normal, often because of *infection*.

**fiber** Part of some foods, including many beans, vegetables, fruits, and seeds. Eating foods with fiber helps the body pass *stool*.

**fibroids** Growths in the *womb* that can cause abnormal bleeding from the *vagina*, pain, and repeated *miscarriage*.

**fistula** A hole in the skin between the *vagina* and the urine tube or the *vagina* and *rectum* that causes *urine* or *stool* to leak from the *vagina*.

**folic acid** or **folate** A B-vitamin that helps make healthy red blood cells. It is especially important to eat enough foods with folic acid during pregnancy to prevent *disabilities* in the baby.

**fumes** Harmful *chemicals* in air.

## G

**gallbladder** A small, muscular sac attached to the *liver*. The gallbladder collects a liquid that helps digest fatty foods.

**gallstones** Hard material that forms in the *gallbladder* and can cause severe pain.

**gangrene** When skin and *tissue* die because of a lack of blood to that area.

**gauze** Soft, loosely woven kind of cloth used for bandages.

**gender discrimination** See *discrimination*.

**gender identity** How a person thinks of themselves—as a woman, a man, another gender, or no gender—and lives in the world. This can affect how a person dresses and acts in their community.

**gender inequality** People being treated differently because of gender. Gender inequality causes women to have less education, power, money and access to *health services* than men.

**gender role** The ways a community expects someone to act, look, think, and feel based on their gender.

**generic medicine** The common scientific name for a medicine that is the same no matter who manufactures it. Compare with *brand name medicine*.

**genital herpes** A *sexually transmitted infection* that produces sores on the *genitals*.

**genital warts** Growths on the *genitals* caused by some types of *human papilloma virus (HPV)* which can be passed during sex.

**genitals** The reproductive parts both inside and outside the body.

**German measles** See *rubella*.

**germs** Very small organisms that can grow in the body and cause some *infectious diseases*.

**gland** A small *organ* of the body that makes and releases a substance, for instance, *hormones*.

**glaze** The liquid coating on a clay pot that hardens when fired and keeps water from seeping through the clay.

**goiter** A swelling on the lower front of the neck caused by enlargement of the *thyroid gland*. This is most often because of lack of *iodine* in the diet.

**groin** Where the top of the thighs join the body.

**gut thread** A special thread for sewing or stitching tears from birth. The gut thread is slowly absorbed (disappears) so that the stitches do not need to be taken out.

## H

**health centers** Places that provide a middle level of health care, usually in larger towns. Health centers may have trained nurses and doctors.

**health posts** A place that provides health care like *immunizations*, *prenatal care*, *family planning*, and health exams.

**heartburn** A burning feeling in the throat that is common in later pregnancy or after eating too much.

**helper foods** Foods that provide *nutrition*—like *protein*, *vitamins*, *minerals*, fats, and sugar—which are needed in addition to the main food.

**hemorrhage** Heavy bleeding.

**hemorrhoids** Small, painful bumps or lumps at the edge of the *anus* or inside it. They are a type of swollen *veins* that may burn, hurt, or itch.

**hepatitis** A serious disease of the *liver* caused by a *virus*. Some forms of hepatitis can be *sexually transmitted*.

**herbicides** *Chemicals* used to kill unwanted plants.

**herpes** Several diseases caused by different *viruses* that cause sores on the mouth or *genitals*. Herpes can be passed through sex.

**high blood pressure** When the force or pressure of the blood upon the walls of the *arteries* and *veins* is more than normal.

**HIV (Human Immune-deficiency Virus)** HIV attacks the *immune system*. Without treatment with *ART*, illnesses happen more often and become more serious, eventually causing *AIDS* and death.

**hives** Hard, thick, raised spots on the skin that itch severely. They may come and go all at once or move from one place to another. A sign of *allergic reaction*.

**hookworm** A *parasitic* worm that infects the *intestines*.

### hormonal methods (of family planning)

Methods to prevent pregnancy that use *estrogen* or *progestin* or both. These methods thicken *mucus* at the opening of the *womb*, keep the lining of the womb from supporting a pregnancy, and may prevent the *ovaries* from releasing eggs.

**hormones** *Chemicals* the body makes that tell it how and when to grow. *Estrogen* and *progesterone* are the hormones that cause many changes during *puberty* and control the *menstrual cycle*.

**hospital** A medical center with doctors, nurses, and special equipment for finding or treating serious illnesses.

**human papilloma virus (HPV)** A *sexually transmitted infection* that can cause *genital warts* and some types of *cancer* including cervical cancer. Most types of HPV do not cause any signs.

**hydrogen peroxide** A *chemical* that kills *germs*, often used for cleaning wounds.

**hymen** A thin piece of skin that partially covers the *vaginal* opening. In some communities, a woman is no longer considered a *virgin* if her hymen is torn, even though it can be torn by activities other than sex.

**hysterectomy** An *operation* in which the *womb* is removed.

## I

**immune system** The parts of the body that recognize harmful *germs* and fight *infection*.

**immunization** See *vaccination*.

**implantation** When the *fertilized egg* attaches to the *womb* wall at the beginning of pregnancy.

**implants** A *family planning* method in which 1 or 2 small tubes containing *hormones* are put under the skin.

**impotence** When the *penis* will not get or stay hard, making penis-in-vagina sex difficult.

**incest** Sexual relations between family members or relatives.

**incision** A cut made into the body.

**incomplete abortion** When part of a pregnancy remains in the *womb* after an *abortion*.

**infant formula** Artificial milk for babies used instead of breast milk. Infant formula and other replacement foods do not have the same nutrition or health benefits as breast milk.

**infection** A sickness caused by *bacteria*, *viruses*, or other *germs*. Infections may affect part of the body or all of it.

**infectious disease** Diseases caused by *germs* or *parasites* that can be spread from one person to another.

**infertility** When a couple has had sex regularly for one year but have been unable to get pregnant. Someone who has had repeated *miscarriages* is also considered infertile.

**infibulation** A form of *female genital cutting* in which all or part of the *vulva* is cut away and the opening to the *vagina* is sewn almost closed. Deinfibulation is when it is reopened for birth.

**inheritance** The possessions, property, or money a person receives after someone dies.

**injections** When medicine or other liquid is put into the body using a *syringe* and needle.

**inner folds** The part of the outer *genitals* that lie just inside the hairy outer folds of the *vulva*. The inner folds are soft flaps of skin without hair that are sensitive to touch.

**internal (female) condom** A thin piece of plastic or rubber that fits into the *vagina* and covers the *inner folds* and *outer folds* of the *vulva*. The condom prevents *sperm* from reaching the egg and also prevents *STIs* from spreading.

**intestines** The part of the digestive system that carries food and finally waste from the *stomach* to the *anus*.

**intimacy** Sharing your private thoughts and feelings with someone.

**intramuscular injection (IM)** *Injection* deep into the muscle.

**intra-uterine device (IUD)** A small object that is put into the *womb* to prevent pregnancy.

**intravenous (IV)** When medicines or fluids are put into a *vein*.

**iodine** A *mineral* found in the ground and some foods that is needed for *thyroid gland* function and prevents *cognitive delay* in babies.

**iron** A *mineral* found in some foods that helps the blood carry *oxygen*.

## J

**jaundice** Yellow color of the skin and eyes. This can be a sign of *hepatitis* or another *liver* problem.

**joints** Places in the body where bones come together.

## K

**kidneys** Two large *organs* in the lower back that make *urine* as they remove waste from the blood.

## L

**labia** Large and small folds of skin that are part of the *vulva*.

**labor** The work of birth, when the *womb* squeezes or contracts, making the *cervix* open, and the pregnant person pushes the baby down through the *vagina* and out of their body.

**laboratory** A place where trained health workers examine blood, *urine*, and other samples from people to identify medical problems and find the best treatment.

**latex** Thin rubber. *Condoms* and gloves used in health care are often made of latex.

**latrine** A hole or pit in the ground for passing *urine* or *stool*. A toilet.

**laxatives** Medicine used for *constipation* to make *stools* softer and more frequent.

**lice** Tiny insects that attach on the skin or hair of people and other animals.

**ligaments** Strong fibers in a person's body that help hold muscles and bones in place.

**literacy** The ability to read and understand written information.

**liver** A large *organ* under the lower right ribs that helps clean the blood and get rid of poisons.

**loss of consciousness** When a sick or injured person seems to be asleep and cannot be awakened. Unconscious.

**lubricants** A slippery cream or jelly used to make dry surfaces wet. Lubricants are often used on *condoms* during sex.

**lymph nodes** Part of the *immune system*, these small lumps under the skin throughout the body trap *germs*. *Infected* lymph nodes become swollen and painful.

## M

**main food** A food, usually low-cost, that is eaten with almost every meal. This main food usually provides most of the body's daily energy. For good *nutrition*, the body also needs helper foods.

**malaria** An *infection* that causes chills and high fever, spread by mosquitoes. The mosquito sucks up the malaria *parasites* in the blood of an infected person and injects them into the next person it bites.

**malnutrition** When the body does not have enough of the foods it needs to stay healthy.

**massage** A way of touching the body to relieve pain, tension, or other signs. **Another action called massage:** squeezing the belly to help the *womb* contract and stop heavy bleeding after birth, *miscarriage* or *abortion*.

**mastitis** See *breast infection*.

**masturbation** Touching one's own body for pleasure.

**maternal mortality** When someone dies from problems caused by pregnancy and birth.

**medical abortion** Using certain medicines to end a pregnancy.

**membranes** A thin layer of skin or *tissue* that either covers *organs* inside the body or lines other parts. For example, the sac that surrounds and protects the baby in the *womb*.

**menopause** When someone's *menstrual periods* stop forever.

**menstrual cycle** The time, from 23 to 36 days, between the beginning of one *menstrual period* and the beginning of the next. About 2 weeks before the end of a menstrual cycle, an *ovary* releases an egg.

**menstrual period (menstruation, monthly bleeding)** When a bloody fluid leaves the *womb* and passes through the *vagina* and out of the body. For most people who menstruate, this happens every 23 to 36 days and lasts for a few days.

**microscope** An instrument that makes very tiny objects look larger.

**midwife** Someone with special training or experience in caring for people during pregnancy and birth.

**migraines** Severe headaches with *blurred eyesight*.

**minerals** Substances in foods—like *iron*, *calcium*, and *iodine*—that help the body fight disease and recover after injury or illness.

**miscarriage** When a pregnancy ends by itself during the first half of pregnancy, usually in the first 3 months.

**monthly bleeding** See *menstrual period*.

**monthly cycle** See *menstrual cycle*.



**morning sickness** When a pregnant person feels *nausea*, often during the first 3 or 4 months of pregnancy.

**mucus** A thick, slippery wetness that the body makes to protect the inside of the *vagina*, nose, throat, *stomach*, and *intestines*.

**mucus method** A *family planning* method in which someone checks the *mucus* in their *vagina* every day to find their *fertile time*, and avoids unprotected penis-in-vagina sex during this time.

## N

**nausea** When a person feels sick to their stomach, as though they want to *vomit*.

**navel** A small, roundish place just below the waist where the *umbilical cord* was once attached.

**nipple** The center of the dark-colored part on the outside of the breast where milk comes out.

**nonbinary** A gender identity that is not “woman” or “man.” Nonbinary people may have a gender that combines some parts of being a woman and a man, or a gender that is different from being a woman or a man.

**nutrition** Good nutrition is eating enough food and the right kind of food so the body can grow, be healthy, and fight off disease.

## O

**operation** When a doctor makes a cut in the skin in order to repair damage inside, or to change the way the body functions.

**oral sex** When a person uses their mouth on a partner's *genitals* to give the partner sexual pleasure.

**organ** A part of the body that is more or less complete in itself and does a specific job. For example, the lungs are organs for breathing.

**orgasm** See *climax*.

**osteoporosis** Weak bones that break easily. Osteoporosis is more common after *menopause* because the body makes less *estrogen*.

**outer folds** The fatty lips of the *vulva* that protect the outside *genitals*.

**ovaries** Small sacs about the size of an almond or very small grape, one on each side of the *womb*. Ovaries produce eggs that join with *sperm* to make a baby.

**overdose** Taking too much of a *drug* or medicine at one time. This can cause serious injury or death.

**ovulation** When an egg is released from one of the *ovaries* during the *menstrual cycle*.

## P

**Pap test** A test in which some cells are scraped from the *cervix* during a *pelvic exam* and then examined under a *microscope* to look for early warning signs of *cancer*.

**paralysis** Loss of the ability to move part or all of the body.

**parasites** Tiny animals and worms that can live in a person or an animal and cause disease.

**peer counselor** Someone trained to talk with another person who shares a similar situation. For example, one young woman may *counsel* another young woman, or someone who used to drink a lot of alcohol may counsel a person who is trying to quit.

**pelvic area** The area of the body between the hips. This is where the reproductive parts are.

**pelvic exam** An examination of of the *genitals* inside and outside the body of a person who can become pregnant. A pelvic exam sometimes includes a *speculum exam*.

**pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)** An *infection* of the *womb*, *tubes*, and other reproductive parts, as well as other nearby *organs*. Also called pelvic infection.

**penis** A tube-shaped *organ* used for sex and to pass *urine*. The penis gets hard during sex and releases a fluid called *semen* that contains *sperm*.

**pension fund** A fund—often set up by a union, employer, or the government—that pays people when they get older and stop working.

**period** See *menstrual period*.

**permanent methods (of family planning)** Methods of preventing pregnancy that make people permanently unable to have children.

**pesticides** Poisonous *chemicals* used to kill insects that destroy food crops.

**PID** See *pelvic inflammatory disease*.

**piles (hemorrhoids)** Swollen *veins* around the *anus*, which can itch, burn, or bleed.

**pimp** A person, often a man, who finds clients for a sex worker and who often keeps all or part of the money the sex worker earns.

**pimple** A spot or small *infected* swelling that grows, often on the face, due to extra oil on the skin. Common in adolescents. Also called *acne*.

**placenta (afterbirth)** A spongy *organ* in the *womb* that gives the developing baby everything it needs to grow during pregnancy, connected to the baby by the cord. After the baby is born, the placenta also comes out of the womb.

**plant medicines** Flowers, leaves, roots and other parts of plants that can be used to treat diseases.

**pneumonia** An *infection* of the small breathing tubes deep in the lungs.

**polyps** Growths found usually in the *womb*. Polyps are almost never caused by *cancer*.

**post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP)** Short-term use of *antiretroviral* medicines to prevent getting *HIV* after exposure.

**pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)** Using *antiretroviral* medicines regularly to prevent getting *HIV* when a person is often exposed to it.

**pregnancy in the tube** See *tubal pregnancy*.

**premature** When a baby is born too early.

**prenatal** The time between getting pregnant and giving birth.

**prenatal care** Checkups during pregnancy, when a midwife or specially trained health worker examines a pregnant person to make sure the pregnancy is going well.

**pressure sores (bed sores)** Sores that form on the skin over bony parts of the body when a person lies or sits on that part for too long without moving.

**prevent** Stopping something before it starts.

**PMTCT (Prevention of Mother To Child Transmission)** The use of *antiretroviral* medicines to prevent *HIV* spreading to a baby before, during, and after pregnancy and birth.

**privacy** When a person gives information to a health worker, nurse, or doctor and knows it will not be overheard by or repeated to others.

**progesterone** A *hormone* made by the *ovaries* that causes many changes during *puberty* and controls the *menstrual cycle*.

**progestin** A *hormone* made in a laboratory that is similar to the *progesterone* made naturally by the *ovaries*. It is used in all *hormonal methods* of *family planning*.

**progestin only pill** A method of *family planning* that contains the hormone *progestin* but no *estrogen*.

**prolapsed uterus** When the muscles that hold up the *womb* become weak, causing it to “fall” (drop down) into the *vagina*.

**proteins** Body-building foods necessary for growth and strength.

**puberty** The time in a person's life when their body grows and changes from a child's body into an adult's body. When most people become able to get pregnant or cause a pregnancy.

**pubic bone** The front part of the *pelvic* bones, just above the *vulva*.

**pulse** The feeling of blood being moved through the *arteries* by the heart, which tells how fast the heart is beating.

**purification** Killing harmful *germs* in water before drinking it.

**pus** White or yellow fluid full of *germs*, often found inside an *infected* wound or area.

## R

**radiation** Rays of energy given off by certain elements. Radiation is harmful because it kills *cells* in the body. But radiation can also be used to treat *cancer* by killing cancer cells.

**radiation therapy** When a machine sends rays of energy into a person's body to kill *cancer* cells. The rays cannot be seen or felt.

**rape** When someone, usually a man, puts his *penis*, fingers, or any other body part or object inside another person's *vagina*, *anus*, or mouth without *consent*.

**rectal exam** Checking the *rectum* for growths or other problems. A rectal exam can also give information about the wall or lining of the *vagina*.

**rectum** The lower part of the *intestine* that connects to the *anus*.

**rehydration drink** A drink to treat *dehydration*. It can be made by combining boiled water and salt with *sugar* or powdered cereal.

**resistance** The condition of being able to withstand something that would normally be harmful or deadly. While healthy in people, it is very dangerous in *bacteria* and *viruses*. When germs become resistant to *antibiotic* or *antiretroviral* medicines, these treatments will no longer work against disease.

**rubella (German measles)** A disease spread by a *virus* that can harm a baby growing in the *womb*.

**rhythm method** See *counting days method*.

## S

**safer sex** Avoiding direct contact with a sexual partner's *genitals*, blood, *semen*, or *vaginal* wetness.

**saliva** Wetness in the mouth. Spit.

**sanitation** Public cleanliness to prevent disease, such as providing clean drinking water and keeping public places free of waste.

**scabies** A *contagious* skin disease caused by a *parasite*.

**scar** A mark or change in the skin or *tissue* left after a cut or wound has healed.

**scrotum** The sack of skin and muscles that hangs under the *penis* and holds the *testicles* or *balls*.

**seizure** Sudden, uncontrolled activity in the brain that causes an unusual, short-lived, physical or mental change. A person who has repeated seizures may have *epilepsy*.

**self-esteem** How someone feels about themselves, and about their role and value in their family and community.

**semen** The fluid released from the *penis* during *ejaculation*, which usually contains *sperm*.

**sepsis** A serious *infection* that has spread into the blood. Sepsis can be deadly.

**sex trafficking** When people are forced or tricked into being sex workers. They may be taken to a place where they have no legal rights, money, or way to get home, or they may be threatened with violence from the people they work for.

**sex worker** Anyone who exchanges sex for money or other necessities, goods, or services.

**sexual abuse** See *abuse*.

**sexual assault** Unwanted sexual contact.

**sexual harassment** When a person gives unwanted sexual attention to another person, often someone they have power over. This includes asking for sexual favors, making unwanted physical contact, pressuring someone to have sex, and sending unwanted sexual photos or messages.

**sexually transmitted infections (STIs)** *Infections* that can spread from one person to another during *vaginal sex*, *oral sex*, or *anal sex*. Some STIs are passed in body fluids like *semen*, while others are passed by skin-to-skin contact.

**shock** A dangerous condition with severe weakness or *loss of consciousness*, cold sweats, and fast, weak *pulse*. It can be caused by *dehydration*, heavy bleeding, injury, burns, or a severe illness.

**side effects** When medicines work the way they are meant to yet also cause problems such as an upset stomach or headache.

**speculum** A small hand-held tool that keeps the *vagina* open during a medical examination.

**sperm** *Cells* in *semen* that can swim through the *vagina* and *womb* to fertilize an egg in the *fallopian tubes*. This is how a pregnancy starts.

**spermicide** A *contraceptive* cream, gel or foam that helps prevent pregnancy by killing *sperm*.

**sputum** A gooey substance that settles in the lungs because of an illness like *tuberculosis*.

**squeezing exercise** An exercise to strengthen muscles that hold the *womb* inside the body and help a person control the passing of *urine*.

**status** The importance a person has in their family and community in comparison to others.

**STIs** See *sexually transmitted infections*.

**sterilize** To make something completely free from *germs*.

**sterilization** See *permanent methods (of family planning)*.

**stethoscope** An instrument used to listen to sounds inside the body, like the heartbeat.

**stomach** The sac-like *organ* in the belly where the digestion of food begins.

**stool** The waste after *digestion* that passes from the *anus* during a *bowel* movement.

**stress** Pressure felt by the mind and body caused by activities, events, and social conditions. Too much stress can harm mental health.

**stroke** A sudden *loss of consciousness*, feeling, or ability to move or talk caused by bleeding or a *clot* preventing blood flow in the brain. A stroke is an emergency.

**subcutaneous injection** An *injection* into the fatty *tissue* under the skin, not into the muscle or *vein*.

**sugar** Sweet foods, like honey or sugar cane, that give energy.

**support groups** When people with a common problem meet together to help one another.

**surgery** See *operation*.

**syringe** An instrument used to *inject* medicine.

## T

**tampons** A plug of cotton, cloth or a sponge that is put inside the *vagina* to absorb blood from a *menstrual period* before it leaves the body.

**temperature** The measurement of a person's body heat.

**testicles** Reproductive organs inside the *scrotum* that start making *sperm* and *testosterone* during *puberty*.

**testosterone** A *hormone* made by the *testicles* that causes many changes during *puberty* and controls the making of *sperm*.

**tetanus** A serious *infection* caused by a *germ* that lives the soil, and the intestines of people and animals. The tetanus germ enters the body through a wound.

**thyroid gland** A small *organ* in the front of the throat that makes *hormones* that affect growth and development. The thyroid needs *iodine* to work properly.

**thermometer** An instrument used to measure a person's body *temperature*.

**tissue** The material making up the muscles, fatty areas, and *organs* of the body.

**toxemia** See *eclampsia*.

**toxic** A harmful substance that can cause disease or death when it enters the body is said to be toxic.

**toxicity** When a person takes too much medicine and it builds up to a dangerous level in the body.

**traditional healers** Healers who use methods based on beliefs that have been passed down from generation to generation.

**transgender** Someone whose *gender identity* or *gender role* is different from what is typical or expected for their sex (female or male) based on their genitals at birth.

**trauma** The harm to health caused when something terrible happens to a person or to someone the person is close to.

**trichomonas** A disease of the *genitals* that is passed during sex.

**tubal ligation** An *operation* in which the *fallopian tubes* are cut or tied so the egg cannot be *fertilized* or travel to the *womb*.

**tubal pregnancy** A pregnancy that implants and grows in one of the *fallopian tubes* instead of in the *womb*.

**tuberculosis** A serious infection caused by a *germ* that usually affects the lungs.

**tubes** See *fallopian tubes*.

**tumor** Abnormal growth.

## U

**ulcer** A *chronic* open sore of the skin, the *stomach*, or the *intestines*.

**ultrasound** A machine that uses sound waves to see inside of the body without cutting it open. Often used during pregnancy to see the developing baby.

**unconscious** See *loss of consciousness*.

**unprotected sex** Penis-in-vagina sex without a *condom*.

**unsafe sex** Direct contact with a sexual partner's *genitals*, *blood*, *semen* or *vaginal wetness*—if there is any chance you or your partner has a *sexually transmitted infection (STI)*.

**urethra** The tube that carries *urine* from the *bladder* to the hole a person urinates from.

**urine** Liquid waste that collects in the *bladder* and leaves the body through the *urethra*.

**Uristix** Small plastic strips that have different squares that change color depending on what is in a person's *urine*. These can be used to find out if a person has *diabetes* or *pre-eclampsia*.

**uterus** See *womb*.

## V

**vaccinations** or **vaccines** Medicines that are *injected* to protect against specific diseases, such as *tetanus*, *measles*, or *hepatitis*.

**vagina (birth canal)** A tube made of muscle that connects the *cervix* to the *vulva*.

**vaginal sex** Sex that involves penetration of the *vagina* with a *penis*, mouth, fingers, or other objects.

**varicose veins** Abnormally swollen *veins*—often blue, lumpy, and winding—on the legs of older people, pregnant people, and people who have had a lot of children. During pregnancy, also sometimes develops in the *genitals*.

**vasectomy** A permanent method of preventing pregnancy, in which the tubes that carry *sperm* from the *testicles* to the *penis* are cut.

**vein** A thin, tube-like carrier of blood back to the heart. A blood vessel. Compare with *artery*.

**virgin** A person who has not had sex.

**virus** A *germ* smaller than *bacteria* which causes some *infectious diseases*.

**visual inspection** A method of screening for *cancer* of the *cervix*. A vinegar solution (acetic acid) is painted on the *cervix* and turns abnormal tissue white.

**vitamins** Part of the *nutrition* from food that the body needs to work properly, to fight disease, and to heal after a sickness or injury.

**vomiting** When contents of the *stomach* come back up and out of the mouth. Throwing up.

**vulva** In a person who can become pregnant, all the *genitals* that can be seen on the outside of the body between the legs.

## W

**withdrawal** Physical and emotional discomfort felt during the period when the body adapts to being without a *drug* or alcohol to which it is physically addicted.

**womb (uterus)** A hollow *organ* with muscular walls that sits in the *pelvic area*. *Menstrual periods* come from the womb, and a *fetus* grows inside the womb during pregnancy.

## X

**x-rays** Pictures of the inside of the body, such as the bones or the lungs, created by a machine that uses *radiation*. The body is not cut open.

## Y

**yeast infection** A vaginal *infection* with white, lumpy discharge, itching, and burning. These infections are especially common during pregnancy and when taking *antibiotics*.