

COSMOPOLITAN

**15 Articles
Guys Pray
Never Run in
Cosmo**

(He'll Break Into a Cold Sweat
Just Thinking About Them)

SEX SMARTS

Secrets



Jessica Biel



COSMO GYNO



Don't contemplate—
just dial your doctor.

Period Warning Signs

If you experience any of these symptoms, alert your gyno.

BLEEDING THAT'S MUCH HEAVIER THAN USUAL. If your period is at least a few days longer than it normally is or you're going through way more tampons than usual, you may have uterine fibroids—benign tumors on the uterine wall. A heavier flow or bleeding between periods also can be a sign of a precancerous condition.

CRAMPS THAT WON'T QUIT. Intense pelvic pain before and during the first few days of your period is

normal. But if you can't quell the cramps with over-the-counter painkillers that contain ibuprofen or naproxen, endometriosis—a disease in which pieces of the uterine lining grow in the abdominal cavity—may be to blame.

MORE THAN TWO MISSED PERIODS IN A ROW. Your skipped cycles could be the result of dieting, stress, or a thyroid condition. Another possibility, especially if your cycle is really unpredictable, is a hormone condition called polycystic ovarian syndrome.

SOURCE: ELIZABETH POYNOR, PH.D., GYNECOLOGIC ONCOLOGIST AND PELVIC SURGEON IN NEW YORK CITY

BY ESTHER CRAIN

Skin Cancer and HPV

A recent study links an STD with this lethal disease.

You know that human papillomavirus (HPV) is a mostly harmless STD that may trigger genital warts and/or cervical cancer. But HPV also appears to cause genital squamous cell carcinoma—a type of skin cancer (in this case not related to UV exposure). The disease is more common in women, and a recent review found that women were nearly three times more likely to die of it than men were.

The best way to protect yourself: Use condoms to cut your risk of HPV in the first place. In addition, examine your pubic region for any odd marks or spots, such as a growth or sore that won't heal. Then have it seen by a dermatologist.

