**Masturbation: It's still okay** [1]

Hey Alice,

I heard a lot of people saying masturbation is the best way to relieve oneself, but doesn't it cause harm?

**Answer**

Dear Reader,

Assuming that by, "relieving oneself," you mean answering sexual urges then masturbation is a great way to experience self-pleasure. There are a lot of myths out there about the harm that masturbation can cause ? excess hair growth on your hands, it will ruin ?real? sex, or cause insanity ? but these are just not true. There are no harmful side-effects to masturbation.

In fact, masturbation has health benefits. Masturbation may:

- Reduce stress and tension
- Be a safer sex option to help prevent against pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (just make sure to clean any toys or objects between uses)
- Allow you to learn more about your body and what feels good to you
- Reduce pre-menstrual and menstrual pain and tension in women (if using a tampon, you will want to remove it if you are going to insert an object or toy so it does not get pushed too far into the vagina)
- Help you fall asleep
- Be an option for those who don?t want to have vaginal, anal, or oral sex

As long as masturbating is not getting in the way of activities like going to school or work, spending time with friends or family, or eating and sleeping, then there is no harm in masturbating.

Hope this helps,

Alice!

Category:
Sexual & Reproductive Health [2]
Masturbation [3]
Related questions

Can masturbation or using a sex toy desensitize the clitoris? And would my partner prefer her sex toy over me? [4]
Decades of masturbation enthusiasm [5]
Dr. Do Diddle: Pre-med masturbation and productivity [6]
Religious school and sexuality [7]
Condoms for masturbation? [8]

Published date:
Jan 10, 1997

Last reviewed on:
May 16, 2014

Footer menu

Go Ask Alice! is not an emergency or instant response service.

If you are in an urgent situation, please visit our Emergency page to view a list of 24 hour support services and hotlines.

Source URL: http://www.goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/masturbation-its-still-okay#comment-0

Links