Getting verbal about musty oral sex

Dear Alice,

I recently started dating a woman and when I gave her oral sex the first time, it smelled very musty. I didn't want to offend her so the next date I planned a bath for us so I could bathe her and I'd be sure of her vagina being clean. But within an hour I was giving her oral sex and the smell was still there although not as strong. I had asked her when her period was due and she told me not for two weeks. Women before when I've done this never had an odor right after a bath. I've only been with her a short time and like her very much and want to continue the relationship, but I don't want to offend her by bringing this issue up, but at the same time I don't know if I could get used to it? Please tell me how to solve this problem or what I could say that wouldn't offend her.

Thank you!

Answer

Dear Reader,

Every vagina?s aroma, fluids, and taste is unique; these characteristics can even change throughout the menstrual cycle. For those with vaginas, it?s wise to be aware of what a normal vaginal scent smells like so when a difference is detected, it can be addressed (possibly with a medical professional ? more on that in a bit). In your role, you may find that as you become more familiar with your partner and their body, you're able to detect these changes as well. However, since you recently started dating and aren't sure if what your sniffer is picking up is their usual scent, it may be best to start a conversation with your partner to determine whether what you're smelling is normal or whether something else is going on.
Reader, you mentioned that even after taking a bath together, the smell still lingered, but not as strongly. It's possible that this is your partner's natural aroma. It's may also be that there's something causing the "musty" smell. For example, a strong, sour, or fishy vaginal odor may be indicative of an infection. Infections may be caused by several factors, including bacterial or yeast overgrowth in the vagina, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), or even from wearing tight or damp clothing, particularly those made of synthetic material (e.g., nylon pantyhose) that don't allow the area around the vulva [2] to breathe. Others may have an odor as a result of certain foods that they eat or from excessive sweating. It's also possible that the odor could also be from the anus, rather than the vagina.

While it may be uncomfortable to talk about this odorous situation, it's a good idea to broach the topic when you're not being sexually intimate. One way to approach the issue in a sensitive way is by saying something like, "I want to bring up something that's hard to talk about. I really like you? and I enjoy getting to know your body and being intimate. I know that every person has their own scent, and since I'm becoming more familiar with your body, I'm wondering if this is your usual vaginal smell. I've noticed that it's strong and I want to make sure there isn't anything else going on.? Depending on the response, you can ask if they've noticed any changes in that area, not just related to odor. If so, you may recommend that they visit a health care provider to have it checked out. You can also approach the situation indirectly by saying something like, "Since we've started a sexual relationship with each other, I think it would be a good idea to get tested for STIs [3] ? what do you think?" If you raise this issue, however, be willing to get tested yourself (it's a great idea in any case, regardless of this particular issue). The reason why this approach may be helpful is that if an infection is indeed the cause for the scent, it can be diagnosed and treated.

That said, if your partner's "musty" smell is their signature scent, you may find that you get used to the unique smell and taste with time or opportunity. You may even begin to associate that particular aroma with your partner's pleasure (and yours). If, however, you find that you don't get used to it, you may try strategies such as keeping some of your saliva in your mouth and breathing through your mouth to reduce your sense of smell. If that's not doing it for you, consider talking with your partner about ways you two can be intimate beyond oral sex.

Good luck!

Alice!

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About Oral Sex [6]

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