



ASK THE SEXPERT

DR MAHINDER WATSA

1 My wife and I are both 37 years old. We had our second baby before completing our third year of marriage. Now after giving birth to the second child, she is not keen on having sex, and we hardly get together, and that too after a few fights. Previously, we would probably do it once a year. Is this a temporary phase or is this the expiry of our married life? Please advise.
 She should consult a gynaecologist who will be able to give her the right advice, medication, and some sympathy.

2 I'm an 18-year-old girl. In May, my boyfriend fingered me 4-5 times in a span of five days. The last time he did this, he went inside and I told him that it was hurting and he stopped immediately. I noticed a small amount of blood, which was probably caused by a tiny cut, I am guessing. I've got my periods regularly since May. I also took pregnancy tests which were all negative. Yet, is there any chance for me to get pregnant?
 There is little chance of a pregnancy.

3 I am a 25-year-old man. My wife is suffering from polycystic ovarian disease (PCOD). Is there a risk of me getting any infection if we indulge in oral sex and/or penetrative sex? During oral sex, if the liquid from one's partner's genitals should enter one's mouth, is it harmful? Can it cause an infection?
 No, there's no harm. And, PCOD is not an infection.

Something smells right

Rajiv Sheth, a perfumer from Ahmedabad, was in town to introduce people to the art and science of constructing fragrances

Shivani Kagti
 mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

It's 11.30 in the morning and a group of about 15 people are busy dipping strips of paper into tiny vials filled with clear fluid. Each vial is numbered but there's no other indication of what the contents are. Delicately lifting each strip to the nose, everyone inhales deeply before putting away the strip. There's silence for a few seconds as each one tries to process what they've smelt. One tentative voice pipes up, "I smell herbs... spices." Another woman in the group chimes in with, "Yes, it reminds of something I have eaten - maybe a leafy herb?" "It's minty", says another. "Medicinal" is yet another observation. Everyone looks expectantly at Rajiv Sheth, the "nose" and creative director of All Good Scents, a line of fine fragrances, who is conducting this perfumery workshop at the Urban Ladder store in Domlur. "Yes, you are all right. Obviously, you have a nose for this business! This particular facet is called Aromatic; it comes from the French word *aromatique* which usually denotes aromatic herbs. The components of this facet are lavender, mint, basil,



thyme, rosemary, anise, eucalyptus and sage. And it's a top note in many masculine fragrances."

Sniff-and-tell

Sheth has just described one of 18 olfactory facets that go into the construction of a perfume. As the two-hour workshop progresses, the participants are introduced to 12 such facets through a similar sniff-and-tell process. There's the absolutely divine *Fougère* with notes of lavender, geranium, vetiver, coumarine and oak moss, while *Woody* is a beautiful melody of cedarwood, sandalwood, patchouli, vetiver and oak moss. The intriguingly-named *Gourmand*, on the other hand, triggers memories of baking and vanilla with its undertones of cocoa, coffee, honey, caramel and chocolate. These facets, composed of

natural extracts as well as aromatic chemicals, are all neatly placed in a box called a perfumer's organ. Sheth has tied up with French training centre, *Cinquième Sens* to conduct this perfume creation workshop. A slim handbook, handed to each participant, comes with diagrams of the olfactory pyramid and information on each olfactory facet; there's also a page for formula documentation.

A nose for business

Ahmedabad-based Sheth was in the city on the behest of Gathr, a company that promotes alternative social experiences. The entrepreneur's love affair with perfumery began as a child watching his grandfather work. The latter had founded a family business exporting essential oils and would spend hours distilling and blending the

I always advise people not to buy a perfume after smelling it immediately. Spray a perfume and wear it through the day to see out how it plays out

aromatic oils. After completing his graduation (BSc) in Mumbai, Sheth enrolled for a Masters in Perfumery programme at the reputed ISIPCA institute in Versailles - an exclusive school founded in 1970 by Jean Jacques Guerlain. "Until then, no other Indian had enrolled at their institute. The entire course was conducted in French which I had to learn

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23

GIVING GYAN

Bachi Karkaria



There are agony aunts, and then there is Bachi... She'll sort you out

You can write to **Bachi Karkaria** at givinggyan@timesgroup.com

Dear Bachi,
 It has been seven years since my daughter got married and left Mumbai. Her husband is a businessman and asked her to leave the job after marriage, as the family is well settled in Surat. They have a 5 1/2-year-old daughter. My son-in-law has a habit of visiting prostitutes. He was dutiful as a father and as a husband. He managed the show so well for the last four years that my daughter did not have any doubt. It was only in the last month that my daughter came to know about his activities. Of late, he has fallen in love with one prostitute. He tells my daughter that she can leave the house and he would manage their daughter single-

handedly. He is also supported by his parents in this regard. He threatens my daughter by saying that she may go to any lawyer but they are moneyed people and they will never hand over the daughter to her. My granddaughter has a spectrum of autism. She expresses herself with one word or two or sign language. She is unable to describe what has happened in the school. Continuous support is required for the upbringing of such a child. My daughter is the legally wedded wife. What should my daughter do or say to protect herself?

- Vexed Mom

Dear Vexed Mom,
 This is absolutely shocking

and my heart goes out to your daughter, and even more to that poor autistic child. There seems to be no explanation for. let alone limit to, a man's irresponsibility especially when it comes to his libido. This is no adolescent with rogue hormones, but a middle-aged man with a kid who finds it difficult to cope even with normal life in a well-adjusted home. Certainly, your daughter's position is untenable. She should immediately seek legal help to protect her interests and those of her child.

There's no question of leaving her in the hands of her philandering father, his dubious new love and his over-indulgent parents who should know better

than to take his side. The in-laws may be moneyed, and lawyers are notorious for being able to subvert justice, but the law is on your favour. Have faith in it. But also be fully aware that victory will be as problematic as defeat. Can your daughter go back to work and manage to give her child the attention she needs, even if the husband is made to pay full support?

Your emotional anchor is crucial. Be there for her as much as is possible. It is vital that she approaches this whole messy business as a woman who has chosen to take the path of self respect and that she never sees herself as a victim or guilty in any way, or allows anyone to do so.



SEND YOUR QUERIES TO
 Ask the Sexpert, Bangalore Mirror, 9th Floor, Du Parc Trinity Building, #17, MG Road, Bangalore-560 001 or email at drwatsa@timesgroup.com. Contact Dr Watsa, send an email to mcwatsa@hotmail.com

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22

before joining the school," says Sheth, who spent 12 years working in France before moving back to India to launch his brand All Good Scents in 2013. "While India has a high culture of fragrances [mainly in the form of attars and natural oils], it's very different from the fine perfumery of France. I wanted to fill that gap with All Good Scents." Currently, all his perfumes are manufactured in Grasse.

Hitting the right notes

Using the olfactory pyramid as a guide, Sheth encourages participants to construct three different scents based on their learnings. For instance, each of the 18 olfactory facets are categorised into top notes, middle or heart notes and base notes. At the top of the pyramid are the top notes, which typically contain the following facets – Citrus, New-freshness and Aromatic. Top notes are what you smell when you first take a whiff of a perfume. But these are weak in tenacity and fade away soon. "I always advise people not to buy a perfume after smelling it immediately. The best thing to do would be to spray it on oneself and wear it through the day to see out how it plays out." The notes that linger the longest are the base notes (woody, spices, etc) and this is what creates the fragrance's personality. In the middle of the pyramid are the heart notes (flowers, fruits, etc) which are more consistent than top notes and last for four-five hours.

To construct a perfume, participants are advised to choose five fac-

ets and use them in varying proportions (with a maximum of 20 drops). The formulation document in the handbook which lists all the facets is handy to make a note of how many drops per facet one plans to use in each perfume. The results are not all up to one's expectations with some facets overpowering others but there are a few pleasant surprises as well.

A 'memorable' experience

Sheth reveals that whether one likes or dislikes a particular smell or scent is directly linked with something called the olfactory memory. According to Livescience.com, "the olfactory system has unique connections with two key regions in the brain's temporal lobe: the hippocampus, which is critical for laying down new long-term memories, and the amygdala, critical for processing emotions. Unlike all the other senses (i.e., vision, touch and hearing), which require many connections – synapses – to reach the hippocampus and amygdala, olfactory information has immediate access to those systems." This means that one easily associates each smell with a place, time, person or situation and stores it in long-term memory. As Sheth explains, "It's part of your subconscious and that's why a particular odour can trigger an immediate emotion and reaction." For the participants, who walked away with their creations and new insight into the art (and science) of composing a perfume, this was definitely a base note experience – one that wasn't likely to fade away any time soon.



MIRRORLIGHTS

Eating dark chocolates may diabetes at bay

Love dark chocolate? According to a study, compounds found in cocoa – the main ingredient of chocolate – can actually help prevent as well as treat diabetes. The findings showed that cocoa compound named epicatechin monomers helps the body release more insulin and responds to increased blood glucose better. When a person has diabe-

tes, their body either does not produce enough insulin or does not process blood sugar properly, because of the failure of beta cells, which produce insulin. However, the study found that the increased presence of epicatechin monomers helped beta cells to remain stronger as well as enhanced their ability to secrete insulin. "What happens is epicatechin monomers is protecting the cells, increasing their ability to deal with oxidative stress," said lead author Jeffery Tessem, assistant professor at Brigham Young University (BYU), US.

"The epicatechin monomers are making the mitochondria in the beta cells stronger, which produces more ATP (a cell's energy source), which then results in more insulin being released," Tessem added. –IANS



Screen your baby's products carefully

After a US jury asked Johnson & Johnson to pay \$417 million in a case that linked talcum powder with cancer, pediatricians share what else could harm your baby

Deborah Grey
mybangaloremirror
@timesgroup.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

When it comes to babies, every parent wants to give them nothing but the best. But while we look for top brands while shopping for our child's needs, what we should really be looking for may be listed in fine print on the labels of these products. Who would have thought that talcum powder, a product we've been using on babies' bottoms for years could be linked to ovarian cancer. Yet, on August 21, a California jury ruled in favour of a 63-year-old woman who had developed the condition, she established, after decades of using talc for feminine hygiene.

In fact, we learn, several harmful chemicals are to be found even in the products you take for granted as 'tried-and-tested', and not knowing better may put your infant at risk. Here are a few chemicals and substances that you should watch out for while purchasing grooming products, food and toys for babies.

Powder could trigger asthma, cell mutation

Talc is a clay mineral found in rock deposits. It is finely ground and then added to baby powder. It helps absorb moisture and therefore keeps the baby's skin dry. For decades, mothers used this on their baby's bottoms, but according to Dr Yogesh Gupta, consulting pediatrician and neonatologist, Fortis Hospital, "Babies often end up inhaling fine particles of talc and these irritate the respiratory system. This often leads to wheezing and asthma." And, that's not all.

The rocks from which talc is derived often have asbestos deposits, a known carcinogen, in them. "The asbestos cannot be completely removed from the powdered talc. So when a baby inhales the talc particles, sometimes trace amounts of asbestos can also get deposited in the inner lining of lungs. This can also lead to abrasions in the cells and in extreme cases even uncontrollable cell division and mutation," warns Dr Gupta. He says that babies don't really need powder. They can be kept dry by wiping moisture prone areas with a clean cotton cloth.

Plastic bottles can affect the endocrine system

"When milk or infant formula is heated in plastic bottles, it is known to release Bisphenol A, that is a hormone disruptor," warns Dr Deep Parekh, Pediatrician and Neonatologist, Mom n Me Clinic. BPA is a xenoestrogen or a compound that mimics the properties of the hormone estrogen, which is associated with puberty and reproduction. This can upset the

baby's delicate endocrine system. Dr Parekh advises the use of glass bottles over those made of plastic. "Also, most bottles have latex rubber nipples. They release nitrosamines that are nitrogen based chemical compounds, many of which are carcinogenic. Moreover, latex breaks down fast and allows bacteria to hide in the cracks and later enter the baby's digestive system. It is therefore wiser to use silicone nipples," he advises.

Shampoos could lead to a hormonal imbalance

Parabens are a class of preservatives widely used in products like baby shampoos and moisturisers. Just like BPA, parabens are xenoestrogens. "Long term exposure to parabens mimics the effect of estrogen, thereby putting the endocrine system at risk and lead to hormonal imbalance," warns Dr Parekh, adding that it is advisable to specifically check the labels of

Babies often end up inhaling fine particles of talc and these irritate the respiratory system. This often leads to wheezing and asthma

– Dr Yogesh Gupta

baby shampoos and bath products to ensure that these say, "paraben-free". In fact, many manufacturers boast that their products are free of parabens, and these products are readily available in India.

Baby lotions could cause rashes

Many baby lotions contain Polyethylene Glycol (PEG) and Polypropylene Glycol (PPG). "These chemicals open up the pores of the skin and allow for better absorption of the product," says Dr Gupta. "But these chemicals are also known to cause rashes and increased skin sensitivity among babies. Long term or excessive use might also cause cancer," he warns, advising parents to check labels and pick products that specifically state they are PEG/PPG free. Pediatricians recommend using natural oils like edible coconut oil, almond oil or olive oil for massaging babies.

Wipes could weaken the immune system

It is the byproduct of chlorine bleaching and therefore baby diapers and wipes might retain trace amounts of it. "Dioxin is linked to reproductive and developmental problems. It can also interfere with the immune system and hormones," warns Dr Parekh. According to the World Health organization (WHO), Dioxins are highly toxic and can also cause cancer. Dioxins should not be confused with another harmful chemical called 1,4 Dioxane. This is a colourless liquid with a faint smell and is often used in the production of baby shampoos. The US Environmental Protection Agency classifies dioxane as a probable human carcinogen.

Disposable diapers could be dangerous

Some disposable baby diapers contain the chemicals toluene, xylene and ethyl benzene. "These have been linked to cancer, respiratory disorders and brain damage as per a 1999 study by Anderson Laboratories published in the journal *Environmental Health*. Diaper emission studies performed on mice have linked these chemical emissions to asthma and respiratory distress," says Dr Parekh. Another chemical called sodium polyacrylate is used to make diapers super absorbent. "But this chemical is also known to trigger allergies. Diaper brands should therefore specify if any of these ingredients are being used," he says. While it is inconvenient to stick to cloth diapers as they need frequent changing, use of disposable diapers should be minimised.

