

# Summer Sex Saboteurs

**Glamour** provides medical E.R. for summer's sneaky passion spoilers.

The heat is on, which means things like sand and poison ivy can trespass onto your "privates" property, causing a host of down-below woes. Here, a few fast antidotes:

## Beach

**BEWARE:** Sand. "When it gets into the creases and folds of the vagina, sand can cause abrasions [think sandpaper], which makes it easier to catch STDs, including HIV," says Karl Beutner, M.D., Ph.D., associate clinical professor of dermatology at the University of California at San Francisco. Not to mention that a sandy intercourse experience is anything but comfortable—for you or him.

**ANTIDOTE:** Cleanse vaginal wounds with cold water, and don't have sex again until they're completely healed (a few days to a week). Applying petroleum jelly to wounds two to three times a day will help you heal faster.

## Yeast Infections

**BEWARE:** Wet bathing suits and sweaty spandex workout wear. The combination of heat and moisture down below creates the optimal conditions for a yeast infection. You probably know the symptoms: itching, burning and a thick, white, cottage-cheese-like discharge.

**ANTIDOTE:** Wash (don't scrub) your vaginal area with a gentle cleanser, and keep the area dry and cool by wearing loose cotton clothes. Use an over-the-counter anti-yeast cream or suppositories; symptoms should improve after three days. If not, see a doctor for a stronger, prescription medication.

## Sun

**BEWARE:** Tan-through bathing suits, high-cut bikinis, thongs and any swimwear that bares virtually virgin skin. "Areas that haven't been exposed to the sun will burn more easily than tanned skin, which has some baseline melanin that provides a little protection," explains Dr. Beutner. The burn could flake, blister or itch for up to two weeks and, worse, increase your risk for skin cancer.

**ANTIDOTE:** To prevent burns, cover your whole body with sun-screen, even under your suit. If it's too late, soak in a cold bath. Anti-inflammatory drugs, like ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), can ease pain and swelling, while Benadryl will help combat itching.

Sand trap: Ward off a deed-doing disaster.



## Poison Ivy

**BEWARE:** This plant's sap. If you're allergic to it, you could have a nasty reaction—swelling, blisters and an itchy rash—that can last up to three weeks. And if the sap gets on, say, your hands and you touch him (or yourself) below the belt, you could spread the rash to your vaginal lips—or his penis.

**ANTIDOTE:** Wash the sap off your body and clothes immediately—while most dermatologists agree that scratching by itself won't spread the rash, the super-potent sap will. Take Benadryl and, on nongenital areas, apply calamine lotion to dry out the rash. If you do have a reaction in your vaginal area, call a doctor right away—you may need a cortisone pill or shot—and in the meantime, apply one percent hydrocortisone cream (available over the counter) to relieve the discomfort.

—DINA ROTH



**News Flash**

## Birth Control Botcher?

St. John's wort may reduce the effectiveness of the Pill, warns the FDA, based on new evidence about the herb's interactions with certain drugs. If you're taking both, talk to your doctor about trying a prescription antidepressant or switching to a different method of birth control, like a diaphragm or condoms with spermicide. —D.R.