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'My partner almost fractured his penis - and it's now peak season for it'

Yes, it's an actual thing! A sexual health expert explains what it looks like and what to do if it happens to your man.

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Penile fractures actually happen. Image: iStock

It was around this time of year that my partner almost fractured his [penis](#).

I was living in a share house with a bunch of other [university friends](#) and we thought we were the only ones at home. We'd been out on the town [drinking all night](#) and were feeling a little frisky.

Sometimes when alcohol is involved, one gets more adventurous, and so we decided to mix it up with some raunchy action in the front sunroom of the house.

We were going for it when we heard a discrete but 100% audible cough. Someone else was in the sunroom too.

Little did we know that one of my friends had offered her girlfriend a couch for the night. And she was only metres away from us in the darker part of the sunroom.

To make matters worse, she was a do-gooder type who had volunteered in orphanages in Africa and had all sorts of altruistic kudos to her name. Not the kind of girl who would shag someone in full view of an onlooker.

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Caught in the act

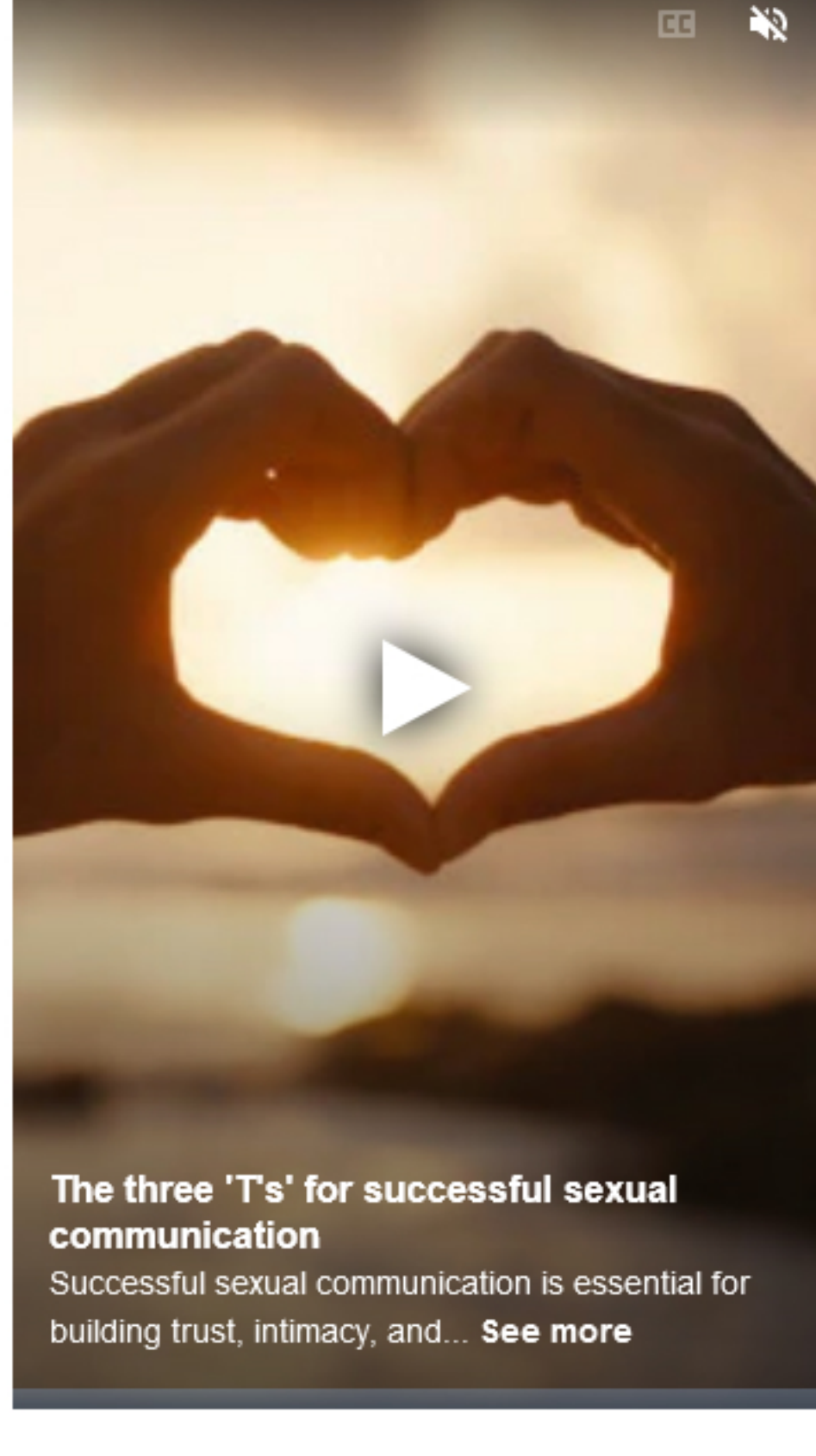
Mortified that we'd been sprung, my partner did a sideways dive through the window that connected the sunroom to my bedroom. In the process, he bashed his fully erect penis against the rim of the window, bending it at an awkward angle. Ouch!

If, by some mercy, the woman wasn't awake while we were hard at it, she certainly would have been after hearing his moans and groans as he writhed in agony on the bed.

After a quick drunken assessment, we decided no medical assessment was necessary and passed out (definitely not advisable). Needless to say, we waited for the guest to leave in the morning before showing our faces.

It's been years since the incident and my partner's penis recovered just fine, but the memory came back to me when I read recently the risk for this kind of injury is particularly elevated over Christmas and New Year.

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It's penile fracture season - yes it's a thing!

Research published in the [British Journal of Urology International](#) looked at whether Christmas might be a risk factor for penile fractures, due to the intimacy and euphoria of the season.

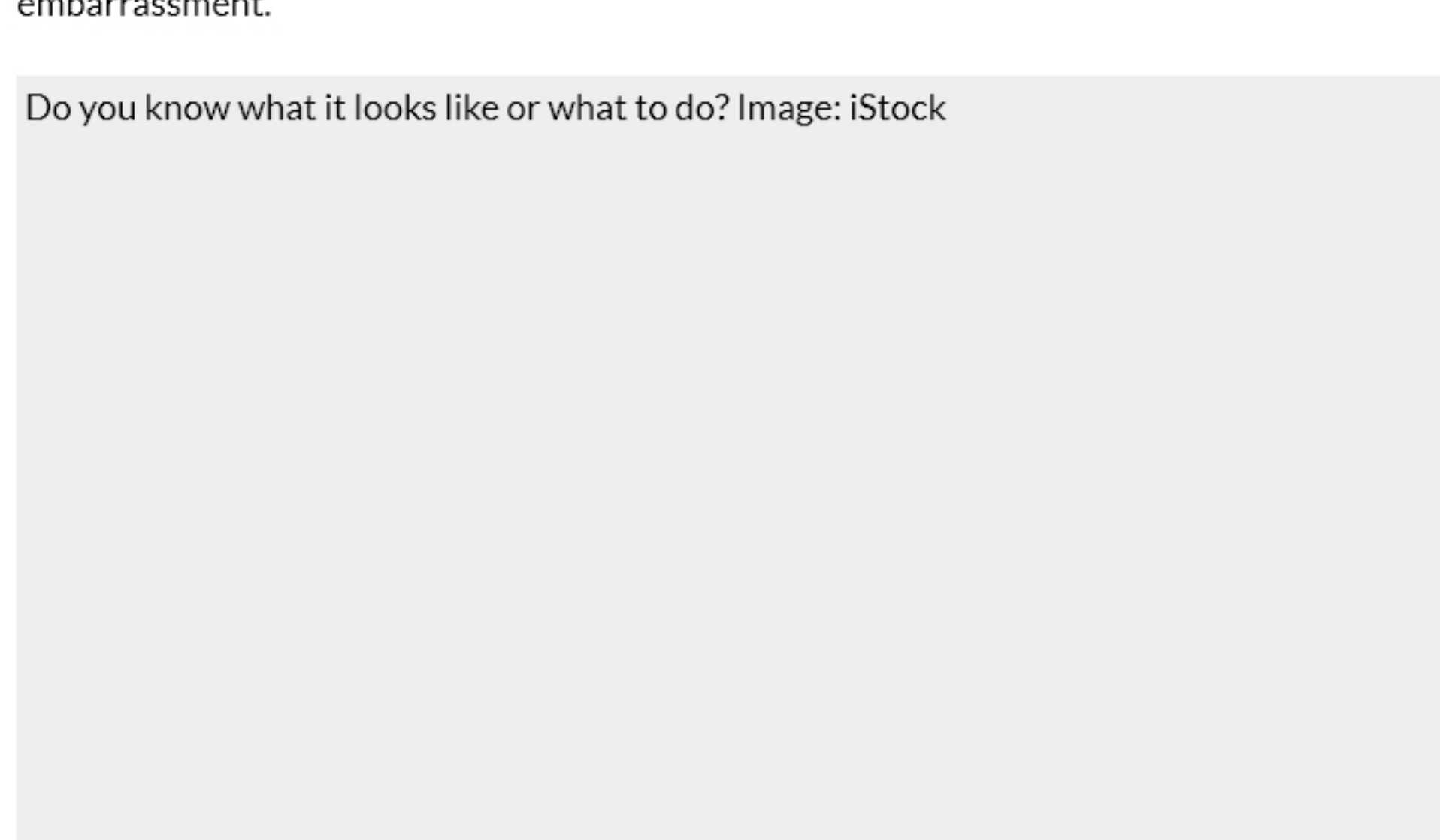
The researchers studied [hospital data](#) in Germany between 2005 and 2021 - specifically, 3,421 patients with a penile fracture requiring a hospital stay - and found the incidence of penile fractures displays a seasonality. Weekends and summertime were also associated with more penile fractures.

Men's Health Melbourne founder and director, Associate Professor Darren Katz, said the most common cause for a penile fracture was a "mishap" during sexual activity.

"Usually this is with a partner (certain positions are more prone to this happening), but uncommonly it can be also self-inflicted during masturbation or other manoeuvres," he said.

"If a man is doing a manoeuvre to his penis and it causes pain - he is at risk of fracture."

As a subspecialist penile surgeon, Associate Professor Katz treats penile fractures - in fact, he dealt with an emergency severe penile fracture three weeks ago - but said it was a rare occurrence and likely under-reported due to patients avoiding seeking treatment due to embarrassment.



Do you know what it looks like or what to do? Image: iStock

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What is a penile fracture and how do you treat it?

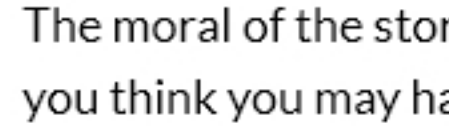
Classic symptoms include hearing a "pop", "snap" or a "crack" during sexual activity, which is associated with pain. Soon thereafter the penis loses the erection.

The penis often swells up and becomes bruised/purple. It is often described as an "eggplant" appearance, Associate Professor Katz said. In severe cases, the urine channel (urethra) can also become damaged and blood can drip out of the end of the penis.

"The best treatment of a penile fracture is rapid recognition of the problem, prompt referral to a urologist and an operation to fix the fracture," Associate Professor Katz said.

"Ideally the surgery should happen within 24 hrs or so. The penis can "heal itself" without surgery, but the chances of a good outcome are considerably lower than compared to surgery undertaken shortly after the injury."

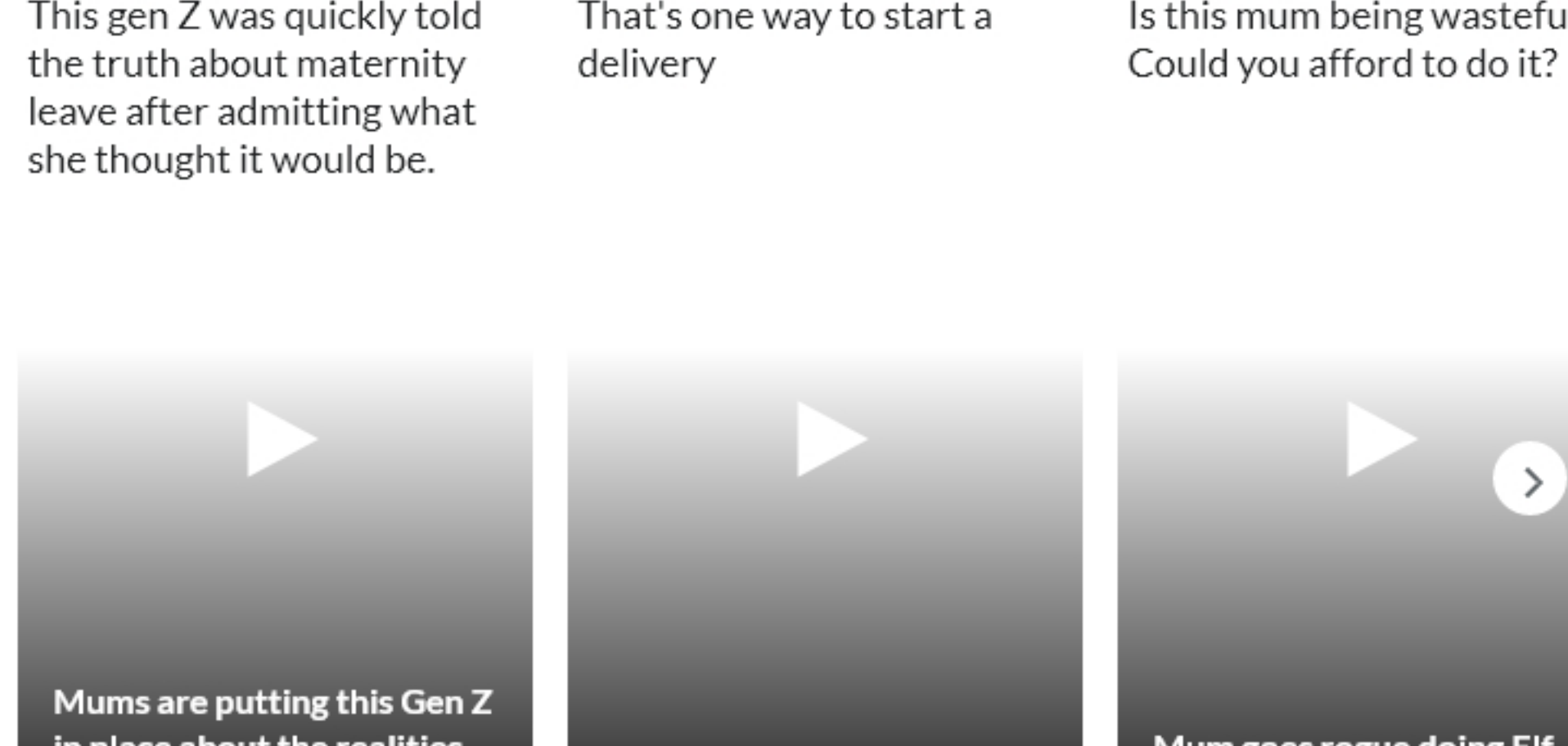
The moral of the story: giddy up, but go easy. And if you think you may have had a penile fracture - head to the emergency department pronto.



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