

CONTACTS

acon

Sydney

Phone: 9206 2000

Freecall: 1800 063 060

9 Commonwealth Street

Surry Hills NSW 2010

www.acon.org.au

Hunter: 4927 6808

Illawarra: 4226 1163

Mid-North Coast: 6584 0943

Northern Rivers: 6622 1555

Sex Workers' Outreach Project: 9319 4866

Positive Living Centre (PLC): 9699 8756

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Sexual Health Infoline

Phone: 1800 451 624

Gay Men's Health Hotline

Phone: 1800 009 448

People Living with HIV/AIDS (NSW)

Phone: 9361 6011

www.plwha.org.au

NSW Users and AIDS Association

Phone: 8354 7300

www.nuua.org.au

Hepatitis C Council

Phone: 9332 1599

www.hepatitisc.org.au

HEP C Hotline: 1800 803 990

PEP Hotline (24 Hours)

Phone: 1800 737 669 (1800 PEP NOW)

STI Information

www.whytest.org

acon BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY'S
HEALTH & WELLBEING

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HIV & AIDS THE BASICS

a SAFE SEX GUIDE FOR GAY MEN

WHAT'S SAFE.
WHAT'S NOT.

HIV POSITIVE OR HIV NEGATIVE

SAFE SEX IS
EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

HIV & AIDS

HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. The virus affects the body's immune system, its main defence against disease. Over time it weakens the immune system leaving the person who has HIV open to other infections. HIV can live in the body for many years without any obvious signs, which means someone can have HIV and still look and feel completely healthy. Someone who has HIV is said to be HIV positive.

AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome which refers to the range of specific illnesses that an HIV positive person may get when their immune system becomes weakened. It is possible to have HIV for many years before getting any of the illnesses usually associated with AIDS.

HIV is transmitted when infected body fluids like semen (cum – including pre-cum, the fluid present before ejaculation), vaginal fluids, mucus from the lining of the arse or blood passes from a person with HIV into the bloodstream of an uninfected person.

There are two main ways that HIV can be transmitted:

- unsafe sex between an HIV positive person and an HIV negative person and
- sharing fits (needles / syringes) and other drug injecting equipment between an HIV positive person and an HIV negative person.

HIV POSITIVE OR HIV NEGATIVE - SAFE SEX IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

SAFE SEX

Safe sex is any sexual activity that does not allow semen (cum and pre-cum), vaginal fluid, mucus from the lining of the arse or blood to pass from one person into the bloodstream of another person.

- 1 **Kissing** – saliva does not transmit HIV.
- 2 **Touching, massage, frottage** (rubbing bodies against each other) and **stroking** are safe as there is no exchange of body fluids.
- 3 **Rimming** (licking someone's arse or having your arse licked) is safe for HIV.
- 4 **Mutual Masturbation** (touching and rubbing each other's cock) is safe for HIV. However, using each other's pre-cum or cum as a lubricant does present a risk for transmission.
- 5 **Fucking with Condoms**

Condoms provide an effective barrier for preventing infected fluids passing from one partner to the other. This makes anal or vaginal sex using a condom and water based or silicon based lube safe for both the insertive (top) and the receptive (bottom) partner.

If used properly condoms are very reliable, however, they can occasionally break or slip off. It's a good idea to check from time to time that the condom is on and that it is still intact.

Under normal circumstances all the activities listed above are safe, meaning that they can't pass on HIV. However, the potential risks may increase under certain circumstances. For example mutual masturbation is safe unless there are open cuts or sores on the hands or dick.

LOW RISK SEX

Low risk sex is any sexual activity that presents a small chance of HIV transmission.

1 Oral Sex

Oral sex carries a small risk for HIV transmission, particularly if it involves getting cum in the mouth. Cumming in the other person's mouth increases the risk of passing on HIV if you are HIV positive. Taking cum in your mouth increases your risk if you are HIV negative, especially if you have any cuts, sores or infected gums. It's best to avoid eating rough or sharp foods, brushing your teeth or flossing immediately before oral sex and if you have gum disease or have had recent dental surgery you should wait until the gums have healed.

2 Docking

Docking (rubbing the head of the dick underneath the foreskin of another man's dick) carries a small risk for HIV transmission. If you are uncircumcised (uncut), the inner surface of the foreskin is susceptible to HIV transmission through exposure to pre-cum or cum. If you are circumcised (cut), pre-cum or cum can enter through the opening of the penis.

Generally speaking, the risk of HIV infection increases for the activities listed above if there are cuts or sores in the mouth or on the dick.

UNSAFE SEX

Unsafe sex is any sexual activity that allows cum (including pre-cum), mucus from the lining of the arse, vaginal fluids or blood to pass from an HIV positive person into the bloodstream of a HIV negative person. This presents a high chance of HIV transmission.

3 Fucking without Condoms

Anal sex without condoms presents the greatest risk for transmission of HIV. If you are the receptive partner (the one being fucked), infected cum or pre-cum can easily enter the bloodstream through the mucus lining of the arse or through tiny cuts or tears caused by friction. If you are the insertive partner (the one fucking), infected blood or mucus from the lining of the arse can enter the cock through tiny cuts in the skin or through the eye of the penis. Having a sexually transmissible infection (STI), including gonorrhoea, syphilis, chlamydia or herpes can increase the chances of HIV being passed on by up to 10 times.

SAFE SEX EQUIPMENT

1 Condoms and Lube

If used properly, condoms will prevent HIV transmission.

1. Choose the right size, check the use by date and Australian standard mark and take care not to tear the condom when opening the packet.
2. Make sure the dick is fully erect before putting the condom on (many uncircumcised men pull the foreskin back before putting it on).
3. Hold the condom by the teat, squeeze the air out of the tip and roll the condom all the way to the base of the cock. Apply plenty of water based or silicon based lube. Don't use oil based lubes like Vaseline, hand cream or Crisco as they can damage rubber and can cause the condom to break.



4. Check the condom to make sure it hasn't slipped off or broken, and regularly add more lube. Hold the condom at the base when withdrawing and only use condoms once. Use a new condom if changing between partners.

1 Gloves

Latex gloves prevent HIV and other STIs entering cuts or sores on the hand when fingering and fisting. Always change gloves when changing partners and use plenty of water based lubricant on the outside of the glove.

1 Sex Toys

If used properly sex toys do not present a risk for HIV transmission. Sharing toys like dildos, butt plugs or vibrators during sex however, will increase the risk by allowing blood, cum, vaginal fluids or mucus from the lining of the arse to pass from one partner to another. To minimise your risk, keep your own toys separate from your partner's, use new condoms on them when switching between partners or wash them carefully in hot soapy water after each person has used them.

RECENTLY EXPOSED TO HIV?

If you think you may have been exposed to HIV you should consider getting Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP). PEP is a 4 week course of anti-HIV drugs which may prevent HIV infection, provided the treatment is started as soon as possible after the potential exposure to HIV.

To be most effective, PEP should be started within a few hours of exposure to HIV. If it is not started within 72 hours (3 days) it is not likely to work.

To get PEP contact your local sexual health clinic, hospital accident and emergency department or the 24 hour PEP hotline.

24 hour PEP hotline 1800 PEP NOW (1800 737 669).

THE HIV TEST

The only way to know your HIV status is to have an HIV test. Knowing your status is important so that you can make informed decisions relating to your sexual health.

You can get a confidential HIV test at your local sexual health clinic or general practice. For information on your nearest sexual health centre, please refer to the back of this pamphlet. Your doctor or health care worker should discuss the test, its implications and any concerns you may have before conducting the test. You should only be given your test results in person. If the results show you are HIV positive, you can contact ACON and other services listed in this brochure to find support, counselling and information services.

OTHER SEXUALLY TRANSMISSIBLE INFECTIONS (STIs)

As well as HIV there are a range of other sexually transmissible infections. STIs can be broken into three categories

- 1 **Bacterial infections like gonorrhoea, syphilis and chlamydia,**
- 2 **Parasites like crabs and scabies,**
- 3 **Viral infections like Hepatitis A and B, herpes and genital warts.**

Bacterial infections can be cured with antibiotics while parasites can be cured with creams or lotions. Viral infections are generally life long infections which may be able to be managed using a range of medications. However, there are effective preventative vaccines for both hepatitis A and B (which you can get from your GP or sexual health centre).

Having safe sex will reduce the chances of other STIs being passed on but it does not eliminate the risk. Different STIs are passed on in different ways. For example, syphilis, genital warts and crabs can be passed on through skin to skin contact while hepatitis A is passed on by particles of faeces (shit) entering the mouth.

Having some STIs like gonorrhoea, chlamydia, syphilis and herpes can increase the chances of HIV being picked up or passed on. Having an STI, even if you aren't aware of any symptoms, can cause inflammation inside the dick or arse. The more sex partners you have the more often you should be tested for STIs.

STI TESTS

Deciding how often you should get tested for STIs depends upon how many sexual partners you (or your boyfriend/fuck buddy) have. The more sexual partners the more often you should get tested. A full STI check up should include throat and anal swabs, a urine test and a blood test.

Check out the www.whyttest.org site for more info on the range of STIs as well as what's involved with getting a test and contacts for clinics around NSW.

You can also sign up for a free STI test reminder notice and, if you have an STI, you can use the site to let your recent partners know they should go for a test.