

Customize Your Content

What is HIV?

HIV Testing

Can I get or transmit HIV from... ?

What affects my HIV risk?

What are some of the best actions that I can take to decrease my chances of getting or transmitting HIV?

Find free, fast, & confidential HIV testing near you

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HIV Risk Reduction Education Tool

Personalized information to reduce your HIV risk from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

What do you want to do?

Customize your content...

This tool allows you to access information that is individually tailored to meet your needs. Just answer the following questions to get started!

I am looking for information for someone who is...



Male



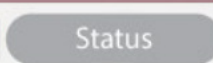
Female



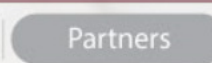
Transgender



Gender



Status



Partners

All selections are optional. You can change your selections at any time. The answers you give will not be kept after you close out your Internet browser.

Customize your content

Locate a particular topic

Learn how safe is...

Find HIV Testing Sites near me

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What do you want to do?

Locate a particular topic...

This tool contains messages divided into four questions. Click one of the four topic areas to see the messages.

What is HIV?

How do I know if I have HIV?

Can I get or transmit HIV from...?

What affects my HIV risk?

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Locate a particular topic

Learn how safe is...

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What do you **want** to do?

Learn how safe is...

Want to know the risk of a particular sexual activity? Explore the interactive risk chart to find out.

- Risk of getting HIV
- Risk of transmitting HIV

See It All >>



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What do you want to do?

Find HIV Testing Sites near me...

This locator can help you find fast, free and confidential HIV testing near you. It can also help you find housing, local health centers, substance abuse assistance, access to HIV medication, and much more.

Click the more tab on the locator widget here to access additional services.



Customize your content

Locate a particular topic

Learn how safe is...

Find HIV Testing Sites near me



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Customize Your Content

What is HIV?

General HIV information

HIV in the United States

Stages of HIV infection

Acute HIV infection

Superinfection

Undetectable viral load

HIV Testing

Can I get or transmit HIV from... ?

What affects my HIV risk?

What are some of the best actions that I can take to decrease my chances of getting or transmitting HIV?

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What is acute HIV infection (AHI) ?

What we know about acute HIV Infection:



Not everyone with AHI feels sick. Signs to watch for are flu-like symptoms. [+ More information](#) It is sometimes called acute HIV syndrome, acute retroviral syndrome, or primary HIV infection to name a few. This is the phase of infection right after people are infected but before they develop antibodies to HIV.

Most current **HIV tests** work by detecting antibodies to HIV that a person develops after becoming infected. During acute infection you may seem to be HIV-negative (uninfected) because you have not yet developed antibodies to HIV—but you are infected. The period during which a person is infected but doesn't yet have detectable antibodies is called the **window period**. [+ More information](#) A ribonucleic acid (RNA) test can be used to help determine whether someone may have acute infection. The RNA test looks for the genetic material of the virus in blood.

It is important to know that when people have AHI, they are much more likely to transmit HIV to others because the **amount of virus in their blood** is very high. This means that a person is more likely to be infected by someone who has AHI than by someone who has been infected with HIV longer. [+ More information](#)

What you can do



If you feel like you have the flu and you had a potential HIV exposure in the past month, ask for a test to diagnose acute infection, such as an **RNA test**. Some providers may be unfamiliar with this kind of test, but it can detect the virus the earliest, at about 10 days after infection. [+ More information](#) It is important to avoid potential HIV exposures until you get tested and know your results. [+ More information](#)

If you learn that you have HIV, you can get **antiretroviral therapy (ART)**. ART is recommended for all people with HIV, regardless of how long they've had the virus or how healthy they are. Getting treatment sooner can improve your health and help you live longer. Being on effective treatment lowers **the amount of HIV virus (viral load) in your body**. If used consistently and correctly, ART can keep people with HIV healthy for many years, and greatly reduce the chance of transmitting HIV to a sexual or drug-using partner who is HIV-negative.

Additional Resources

Which behaviors put you at greatest risk of getting HIV if you are HIV-negative?

Which behaviors put you at greatest risk of transmitting HIV if you are HIV-positive?

- [Signs & symptoms of HIV](#)
- [Acute HIV infection from The Body](#)
- [Acute HIV infection from Medline Plus](#)
- [HIV testing basics](#)
- [Information on fourth generation HIV diagnostic test](#)
- [Diagnosis and management of acute HIV infection](#)



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What affects my HIV risk?

Using barriers & lubricants

Sex & My Sexual Partners

Reducing number of sexual partners

Having multiple sexual partners who overlap in time

Monogamy

Choosing partners with the same HIV status (Serosorting)

Being a top or a bottom to prevent HIV

Withdrawal or pulling out

Negotiated safety

Sex agreements

Disclosure of status

Power differences in relationships

Alcohol & drug use

Taking medicines

Reducing Number of Partners ?

What we know about reducing the number of partners:



The more sexual partners you have in your lifetime, the more likely you are to have a partner with HIV or other **sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)**. Your risk for HIV also depends on what behaviors you do with your partners. And, people who live in **communities** where many people have HIV have a greater chance of having sex with someone with HIV. [+ More information](#)

What you can do



Limiting the number of partners you have can lower your risk for getting or transmitting HIV. This is especially true if you take actions to reduce your HIV risk, including using a **condom** and **medicines to prevent or treat HIV consistently** and correctly. [+ More information](#) (For tips on how to use a condom, visit <http://www.hiv.va.gov/patient/daily/sex/condom-tips.asp>.) Another option is not having vaginal or anal sex. Also, consider other sexual activities that are lower risk for HIV.

Talking openly and frequently with your partner about sex can help you make decisions that may decrease your risk of getting or transmitting HIV. Here are some questions to ask each other that will help you get the conversation started:

- When was the last time you had an **HIV test** and what was the result of that test? [+ More information](#)
- Are you HIV-positive and on **treatment**? [+ More information](#)
- **How many other sexual partners do you currently have?** [+ More information](#)
- Do you have any other **STDs**? [+ More information](#)
- Do you use needles to **inject drugs**? [+ More information](#)

Additional Resources

- [Basic information on HIV and AIDS](#)



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Can I get or transmit HIV from... ?

Sexual activities

Abstinence

Masturbation

Kissing

Mutual masturbation

Outercourse

Fingering and fisting

Watersports

Playing with sex toys

Oral sex

Vaginal sex

Anal sex

Needle/syringe use

Pregnancy, Childbirth, & Breastfeeding

What affects my HIV risk?

What are some of the best actions that

I can take to decrease my chances of getting or transmitting HIV?

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Oral Sex ?

What we know about oral sex:



The risk of getting or transmitting HIV through any type of oral sex is much less than through other sex acts, such as **vaginal or anal sex**. There is little to no risk of getting or transmitting HIV from most types of oral sex. [+ More Information](#) If you are HIV-negative, giving **fellatio** is riskier than other types of oral sex, including getting fellatio. If you are HIV-positive, getting fellatio is riskier than other types of oral sex, including giving fellatio. Using a **condom, dental dam or cut-open non-lubricated condom** can help prevent HIV transmission during oral sex. If you are unable to use a **condom** for fellatio, taking your penis out of your partner's mouth before ejaculation is the next best option.

Your chance of getting or transmitting HIV from oral sex is lower if you are HIV-negative and already taking **pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)** consistently and correctly or if your partner is living with HIV and is taking **antiretroviral therapy (ART)** consistently and correctly. If you are living with HIV, taking ART consistently and correctly can lower your chance of transmitting HIV to an HIV-negative partner.

It's hard to measure the exact risk because most people who practice oral sex also practice riskier forms of sex, like **vaginal or anal sex** when condoms aren't used, at the same time. Several factors may increase the risk of HIV transmission through oral sex, including mouth ulcers, bleeding gums, genital sores, and the presence of other **sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)**. Although there is little to no risk of getting or transmitting HIV through oral sex if semen does not get in the mouth, you can get other **STDs** from oral sex.

Although the chance of getting or transmitting HIV from **anilingus** (rimming) is small, there is a big chance of transmitting hepatitis A and B, parasites, and other bacteria to the partner who is doing the rimming. Your mouth may come into contact with human feces during oral sex, especially during anilingus, and feces can transmit hepatitis A and hepatitis B virus; *Giardia* and bacteria such as *Shigella*, *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, and *E. coli*. If your partner has one of these intestinal bacterial infections or hepatitis A or B infection, and you come in contact with your partner's feces, you could become infected.

What you can do



The risk of getting or transmitting HIV through any type of oral sex is much less than through **vaginal or anal sex**. If you decide to have oral sex, **there are things you can do to reduce your HIV risk** such as using a condom, dental dam or cut-open non-lubricated condom. [+ More Information](#) Also, since **fellatio** with ejaculation is riskier than other types of oral sex, it is important that you avoid getting semen in the mouth.

Because your mouth may come into contact with feces or other **body fluids** during oral sex, it is important that you talk to a health care provider about your chances of getting hepatitis A and B. If you've never had hepatitis A or B, there are vaccines to prevent it. Your provider can help you decide if vaccination is right for you. If you do not have a health care provider, visit <http://www.naccho.org/about/lhd/> to find contact information for your local health department.

Also, keep in mind that barrier methods are the only way to protect you from some **STDs**, including gonorrhea of the throat.

Talking openly and frequently with your partner about sex can help you make decisions that may decrease your risk of getting or transmitting HIV. Here are some questions to ask each other that will help you get the conversation started:

When was the last time you had an **HIV test** and what was the result of that test?

[+ More Information](#)

Are you HIV-positive and on **treatment**? [+ More Information](#)

How many other sexual partners do you currently have? [+ More Information](#)

Do you have any other **STDs**? [+ More Information](#)

Do you use needles to **inject drugs**? [+ More Information](#)

Additional Resources

Which behaviors put you at greatest risk of getting HIV if you are HIV-negative?

Which behaviors put you at greatest risk of transmitting HIV if you are HIV-positive?

- [Oral sex fact sheet](#)
- [Oral sex and HIV](#)
- [Information on hepatitis](#)
- [Giardiasis](#)
- [Information on Salmonella](#)
- [Information on E. coli](#)