

- Have regular health checks.
- If you inject, use a sterile (new) needle every time, and don't share needles.
- Always use sterile, single-use needles for body piercing or tattooing.

Am I at risk?

You should get an STI/HIV check if any of these statements are true for you:

- I have had unsafe sex (without a condom, condom not used properly, condom fell off or condom broke).
- I have had a new partner or more than one partner in the last year.
- I have discharge, pain, or sores in my sex parts.
- I have had sex with someone who has an STI.
- I can't remember if I had unsafe sex (e.g. I was drunk or drugged).
- I am not using condoms because I want to have a baby.
- My partner or I have ever injected drugs.
- I have had contact with someone else's blood (e.g. getting a tattoo, fighting).

If you said yes, even once, get an STI/HIV check.

Condoms stop STIs from spreading

- Check date and seal of the packet – old condoms break.
- Open the packet carefully (don't use teeth).
- Roll on when the penis is hard.
- Pinch the tip so air doesn't get trapped as you roll down.
- Put on some water based lube.
- Hold the condom on your penis when you pull out, so semen (cum) doesn't spill out.
- Throw the condom in the bin – not down the toilet.



Where to get help

- See your local health clinic or doctor
- Call the Sexual Health Helpline
9227 6178 metro
1800 198 205 country

For more information visit healthywa.wa.gov.au



This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.

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Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**
Public Health

All about HIV/AIDS



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HIV/AIDS

HIV is a sickness (infection) that you can get from having sex or sharing needles with someone who has the infection.

Anyone who has vaginal or anal (bum) sex without a condom can get HIV. It can also be spread by blood to blood contact such as sharing syringes or tattooing equipment.

You can't tell if you or another person has HIV just by looking at them.

You can easily get help and treatment if you think you might have HIV or any other sexually transmitted infection (STI).

Pregnancy and HIV

Women who have HIV can pass it on to their baby when they are pregnant, giving birth or breastfeeding, however with medicine it is possible to have a healthy baby. Yarn with your doctor.

Women who have HIV need to have good medical care right from planning their pregnancy, all the way through their pregnancy and after the baby is born.

What is HIV?

HIV is a virus that damages the natural way our body fights against diseases.

Human = a person

Immunodeficiency = our body gets weak

Virus = germs

Sometimes when people first get HIV they have headaches, fever and feel like they have the flu. Other people have no signs of sickness.

People can have HIV in their body for a long time and not feel sick at all. But the infection will never go away and if it is left untreated, it can lead to serious sickness.

Once it is in the body, HIV stays inside and can be passed on to people you have sex or share needles with.

There's no cure for HIV, but people who have HIV can take medicine to keep them healthy.

What is AIDS?

If the HIV virus is not treated, your body can't fight off sickness any more. This is called AIDS.

Once a person develops AIDS, they get different diseases such as infections, pneumonia and cancer.

Acquired = to get

Immune = our body fighting against sickness

Deficiency = our body is very weak

Syndrome = different sicknesses that attack the body.

People can have HIV for many years before their body develops AIDS.

People who have HIV can take medicine to help stop HIV becoming AIDS.

What if I think I have it?

The only way to know if you have HIV is to have a blood test at the clinic.

Clinic workers or your doctor will yarn with you in private before you have the test.

It can take up to three months for HIV to show up in a blood test. Usually the clinic will ask you to come back for a second blood test after three months in case the infection hasn't had time to show in the blood.



With medicine, you can live a long and healthy life if you have HIV. You need to look after yourself to stay healthy (e.g. healthy food, less grog). You need to be careful so you don't give it to anyone else (e.g. have safe sex and don't share needles).

People you've had sex with or shared needles with

If your blood test shows you have HIV, it's important you tell people you have had sex with or shared needles with because they could have it too. They can then be tested and treated. If you want, the clinic can do it for you without telling anyone your name.

There is also a website that you can use to send your sex or needle sharing partner(s) a text message (SMS) or email without using your name. Visit bettertoknow.org.au.

You **can't** get HIV from:

- kissing
- hugging
- sharing cups or plates
- toilet seats
- insects like mosquitoes or pets
- swimming pools
- baths or towels.

You can stop HIV from spreading

- Have an STI/HIV check if you are at risk. (Am I at risk? See next page).
- Stay with one partner.
- Use condoms and water based lube every time you have sex.
- Use your own toothbrush and razor blades.
- Don't let other people's blood get into your blood, e.g. sores, cuts, fighting, tattoos.