

HIV and pregnancy

People who have HIV can still have a baby. A person with HIV can pass on HIV to their baby during pregnancy, giving birth, or breastfeeding. To keep your baby HIV free you need to see a healthcare worker before you get pregnant and all the way through the pregnancy up until when the baby is born.



How do you stop getting HIV?

- Get an HIV and STI check if you think you are at risk.
- Have regular health checks.
- Use condoms and water-based lube every time you have sex with someone, even if you have sex with them regularly.
- If you inject, use a new needle every time. Don't share needles, syringes, filters, water or spoons, even with family or friends.
- Always use new needles for body piercing or tattooing.
- Don't let other people's blood or body fluids get into your blood, e.g. sores, cuts, fighting, tattoos, cultural practices involving blood, and sharing personal hygiene equipment like razors.
- If you already have HIV, taking your HIV medicine and becoming 'undetectable' can stop HIV from being passed to someone else.
- Take a medicine called pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) or post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).

Both PrEP and PEP is when you take medicine to stop yourself from getting HIV.

Speak to your doctor about options for PrEP. PrEP is taken **before** having sex with someone.

PEP is taken **after** having sex with someone without a condom (or the condom broke or fell off), or after sharing needles. PEP must be taken as soon as possible and must be within 72 hours (3 days) otherwise the medicine will not stop you from getting HIV. If you think you need to have PEP, it is best to go to a hospital emergency department.

Condom tips

1



Check expiry date and open carefully

2



Check the condom is the right way up

3



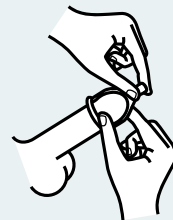
Roll down all the way

4



Apply water-based lube

5



After sex, remove carefully



Consent

Always check in with your partner before and during sex

More information and help

- See your local health clinic or doctor
- Call the HIV Information Line
Metro: 9482 0044
or visit waac.com.au
- Call the Sexual Health Helpline
Metro: 9227 6178
Country: 1800 198 205
- Scan this QR code to view the 'What it means to have HIV' video.

healthywa.wa.gov.au
healthysexual.com.au



This document can be made available in alternative formats.

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For information about blood-borne viruses, scan the QR code



Government of Western Australia
Department of Health

All about HIV



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What is HIV?

HIV is a virus that can make people very sick. HIV is the short name for human immunodeficiency virus. HIV is found in body fluids of people who have an HIV infection, such as:

- blood
- semen (cum)
- vagina fluid
- anal (bum) fluid
- breast milk.

HIV attacks your immune system. Your immune system is the part of your body that fights against infections. If your immune system is weak, you can get sick easier.

If you have HIV and don't take the right medicine, the virus will grow in your body and weaken your immune system. Over time, you can get very sick and may need to go to the hospital. This condition is called AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome).

How do you get HIV?

You can get HIV from having:

- vagina or anal (bum) sex without a condom
- blood-to-blood contact, such as sharing needles or tattooing and body piercing equipment.

You can only get HIV from someone who has HIV and is not taking HIV medicine from a doctor.

You can't get HIV from:

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

How do you know if you have HIV?

You can't tell if a person has HIV just by looking at them. The only way to know if you have HIV is to get tested.

How do you get tested?

To test for HIV, you need to have a blood test. To get a test, you should ask your healthcare worker for a HIV blood test. A HIV test is private. The healthcare worker will talk to you first and everything you say is confidential, so others will not find out.

While you are getting tested for HIV, it is a good idea to get tested for all blood-borne viruses (hepatitis B and hepatitis C) and sexually transmissible infections (STIs) (syphilis, chlamydia and gonorrhoea). You may be asked to have a swab or give a sample of your urine (pee).

Get a test if you:

- have had sex without a condom, the condom was not used properly, fell off, or broke
- have had a new sex partner or more than one sex partner in the last year
- have been told you had sex with someone who has HIV and that you should get tested
- get another STI such as chlamydia, gonorrhoea, or syphilis
- can't remember if you had sex without a condom (e.g. you were drunk or on drugs)
- are not using condoms because you and your partner want to have a baby
- you or your partner have ever injected drugs
- have had contact with someone else's blood (e.g. getting a tattoo, piercing, or fighting).

What if you have HIV?

If your blood test shows that you have HIV, you are not alone and help is available. Talk to your doctor or health professional for support. With HIV medicine, you can live a healthy life. HIV stays in your body, so you need to take medicine as directed to keep your immune system strong.

Taking HIV medicine can lower the virus to undetectable levels, meaning you won't pass it on during sex. However, you will need to keep taking your medicine.

It's a good idea to inform people you have had sex with or shared needles with so they can get tested too. If you would prefer not to talk to your partners, the clinic can contact your partners confidentially, or you can use [bettertoknow.org.au](https://www.bettertoknow.org.au) to send messages without revealing your name.

