Latex condoms, when used consistently and correctly, are effective at reducing the risk of transmission of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, if the condom covers the affected area or site of potential exposure. To reduce risk of transmission of herpes, couples should abstain from sexual intercourse during an outbreak.

**Pregnancy and HIV**
All pregnant women should have an HIV test. Treatment during pregnancy can help an HIV-infected woman protect her baby from becoming infected.

**Is there a relationship between HIV and other STIs?**
Having certain STIs, like syphilis, herpes, human papillomavirus, chlamydia, gonorrhea or trichomoniasis can increase your risk of getting HIV by at least 2 to 5 times if you are exposed. See a healthcare provider for testing and treatment if you think you have an STI.

**If I am HIV positive, what should I do?**
- Take care of yourself, and your partners.
- See a healthcare professional for advice on treatment and health maintenance. Make sure you are tested for TB and other STIs.
- Inform your sexual partner(s) about their possible risk for HIV. Your health department may have a partner notification program that can assist you.
- Protect yourself and others by always using condoms and not sharing needles or “works.”
- Avoid drug and alcohol use, practice good nutrition and avoid fatigue and stress.

**What if someone I know has HIV or AIDS?**
A family member, friend or acquaintance will need your support and understanding, just as with any other serious illness. Assurance of your continued friendship is important. Most importantly, this person will want to be treated as usual, as a valuable human being. And remember, casual contact—a hug, a handshake, a kiss on the cheek—poses no threat of infection to you.
What do I need to know about HIV and AIDS?

HIV is the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). In the United States, about 50,000 people are infected with HIV each year and about 1.2 million people are living with HIV. Of those with HIV, about 14% don’t know they have it, as it can take months or years for any signs of illness to appear.

AIDS is Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. AIDS is the last stage of HIV infection. People with AIDS may experience life-threatening infections which can make them very ill and can eventually kill them. What’s important to know about HIV and AIDS is they can be prevented.

How do people become infected with HIV?
The virus is spread through bodily fluids: blood, semen (cum and pre-cum), vaginal and rectal fluids, and breast milk of an HIV-infected person. People can get HIV infection when they have contact with these fluids and a mucous membrane or damaged skin. Mucous membranes are found in the mouth, penis, vagina and anus.

People with HIV who don’t know it can accidentally pass it to others. This is because they usually look and feel fine for many years after HIV infection occurs.

How can I tell if I have HIV infection?
The only way to know for sure if you have HIV is to get tested. There are testing centers in most communities. Text your zip code to KNOWIT (566948) and you will receive a text with a testing site near you. There are testing centers in most communities.

If your test result is positive, it means you have HIV infection and could benefit from special medical care. See a healthcare provider, even if you don’t feel sick. Might cause latex condoms to break. Drugs and alcohol might cloud your judgment and lead you to engage in riskier sexual behavior. If you shoot drugs, get vaccinated for hepatitis A and B. Never share needles, syringes or “works.” Call the Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for more information at 800-662-4357.

Pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP, is a prevention option for people who are at high risk of getting HIV. For PrEP to be effective, you have to take a pill every day. Make sure you continue to use condoms to avoid other STIs. Ask your healthcare provider if PrEP is right for you.

How is HIV treated?
Currently there is no cure for HIV, however, new drugs can slow the HIV and help you live a long and healthy life. Many people now consider HIV infection a manageable, long-term disease.

How is HIV treated?

You can’t get HIV from touching someone, sharing pens, toothbrushes, or glasses, or coughing and sneezing. HIV is not spread through regular contact in restaurants, workplaces or schools.

Although small amounts of HIV have been found in saliva, feces, and tears, there is no evidence that HIV is spread through these body fluids.

There has never been any danger of becoming infected with HIV from donating blood. The needles at blood collection sites in the U.S. are never used twice.

Post-exposure prophylaxis, or PEP, is a drug you can take no more than 72 hours, or no more than 3 days, after a high-risk event. If taken in time, it can help reduce your chance of getting HIV. If you think you may have been exposed to HIV very recently, see a healthcare provider as soon as possible to find out if PEP is right for you.

Ways to Reduce Risk

The surest way to avoid transmission HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) is to abstain from sexual intercourse, or to be in a long-term mutually monogamous relationship with a partner who has been tested and is known to be uninfected.

It's important to know about HIV and AIDS is they can be prevented.

• Explore activities other than sex that feel good and are safe, like hugging, masturbation, kissing and massage.

• Use a latex condom from start to finish every time you have anal, vaginal or oral sex. Latex condoms, when used correctly and consistently, are very effective in preventing transmission of HIV and other STIs.

• Female condoms are also an option to reduce risk. Barriers (such as dental dams or plastic food wrap) can be used for oral sex and oral-anal sex play (rimming).

• If you share sex toys with a partner, such as a dildo or vibrator, each partner should use a new condom on the sex toy. Be sure to thoroughly clean sex toys after each use.

• If you use a lubricant, use one that is water-based (such as KY-Jelly® or Astroglide®). Lubricants containing oil (such as Vaseline® or hand lotion) might cause latex condoms to break.

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