

# A Teen's Guide to HIV and AIDS



The most important thing you need to know about HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, is that you can protect yourself.

## Teens are at risk

- ✓ HIV is passed through sexual contact and through sharing needles.
- ✓ Nearly one quarter of all new HIV infections occur in young people ages 13 to 24.

## Not having sex is safest

- ✓ Abstinence (not having vaginal, anal or oral sex) gives you the most reliable protection from HIV.
- ✓ You can choose not to have sex now even if you've had sex before.

## Never share needles

- ✓ Never share needles or syringes for drugs, steroids or vitamins.
- ✓ Never share needles or inks for tattoos, ear or body piercing.

## Always protect yourself

- ✓ If you do have vaginal, anal or oral sex, always use a latex condom.
- ✓ Use only water-based lubricants such as K-Y jelly. Never use petroleum-based lubricants such as baby oil. They may cause the condom to break.
- ✓ Follow the directions that come with the condom. If you use them correctly and every time you have sex, condoms are very effective.

## Talk to your partner about HIV

- ✓ Let your partner know that you care too much about him or her and about yourself to risk HIV infection.
- ✓ If you don't want to have sex or if you don't have a condom, say "No!"

## Don't mix sex and drugs

- ✓ Alcohol or other drugs can make it harder to set sexual limits. Even if you mean to say no, you may not.
- ✓ If you are drunk or high, you may not be able to use a condom correctly.

## Know about PrEP and PEP

- ✓ There is a medication called PrEP that can reduce your chance of getting HIV.
- ✓ PrEP is best for people who have a high risk of being exposed to HIV.
- ✓ Talk with your doctor or an HIV counselor. They can help you decide if PrEP is right for you.
- ✓ There is also an emergency medication, called PEP, that can reduce your risk of HIV infection. PEP must be taken within 72 hours of possible exposure.



## Remember the basics

- ✓ HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, is found in blood, semen, vaginal and rectal fluids, and breast milk.
- ✓ HIV is spread most often by having sex without using a condom or sharing needles.
- ✓ People can be infected with HIV without knowing. An HIV test is the only way to know for sure. Everyone should get tested for HIV at least once.
- ✓ Choosing not to have sex and never sharing needles are good ways to protect yourself.
- ✓ If you choose to have sex, have safer sex. This means correctly using a latex condom each time you have vaginal, anal or oral sex.
- ✓ There is still no cure for HIV or AIDS, but with medication HIV can be treated and managed.
- ✓ Treatment can reduce the chance of transmitting the virus to others.

**Your best protection is prevention!**

**Choose to be safe!**

**Getting the facts on HIV and AIDS is important. Look inside to learn how to protect yourself from HIV. For more information, visit [cdc.gov/hiv](https://www.cdc.gov/hiv)**



**@vochange**



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