

Where to get help

See your local health clinic or doctor

Call the **Sexual Health Helpline**

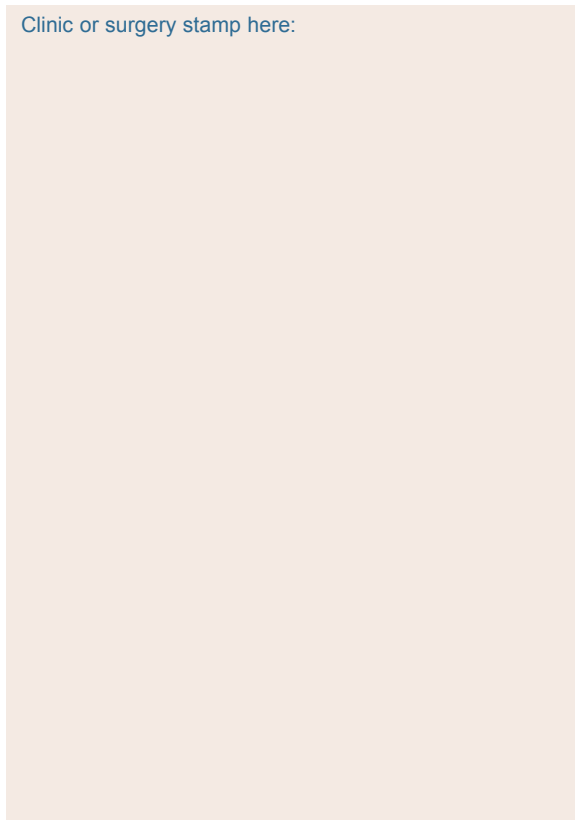
08 9227 6178 (metro)

1800 198 205 (country – free call)

For more information on STIs and HIV, visit

www.population.health.wa.gov.au

Clinic or surgery stamp here:



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HIV/AIDS



Duality by Deborah Bonar

Our Communities Our Responsibility

HIV

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

Anyone who has vaginal, anal (bum) or oral (mouth) sex without a condom can get HIV. It can also be spread by blood-to-blood contact such as sharing needles or tattooing equipment. If a woman has HIV, she can pass it on to her baby.

People can look strong and healthy but have HIV.

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

You can get private 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 or giving birth. The baby may get very sick unless it has special medicine.

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

HIV and AIDS

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. This usually goes away without any special treatment. 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.

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

There is no cure for HIV.





What is AIDS?

If HIV is not treated, your body can't fight off sickness any more.

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 keep them healthy. The medicine can be very hard to take, and will not cure HIV.

The medicine can help stop HIV becoming AIDS.

What if I think I have it?

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

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

It can take up to 3 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 3 months in case the infection hasn't had time to show in the blood.

If you have HIV you need to look after yourself to stay healthy (eg healthy food, less grog). You need to be careful so you don't give it to anyone else (eg safe sex).

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 so they don't give it to anyone else.

If you want, the clinic can do it for you without telling anyone your name.

You can't get HIV from:

- Kissing
- Hugging
- Sharing cups or plates
- Sharing smokes
- Toilet seats
- Playing cards
- Insects 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
- Safe Sex – use condoms and lube **every time** you have sex
- Use your own toothbrush and razorblades
- Don't let other people's blood get into your blood, eg sores, cuts, fighting
- Have regular men's and women's health checks.
- If you inject, use a new needle **every time**, and don't share needles
- Always use sterile, single use needles for body piercing or tattooing

Am I at risk?

- I have had UNSAFE sex (without a condom, condom not used properly, condom fell off)
- I have a new partner or many partners
- I have discharge, pain or sores in private parts
- I was named as a contact of someone else with an STI
- I can't remember if I had UNSAFE sex (eg if I was drunk)
- my partner or I have ever injected drugs
- I have had contact with someone else's blood (eg getting a tattoo, fighting).

If you said **YES** even once,
or are thinking of having a baby...

Get an STI 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 lubricant



- 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.