

# What is HIV & AIDS?

The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a kind of virus called a retrovirus. HIV causes the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) by killing important cells in your immune system. These cells protect you against bacteria, viruses and cancers. After many years of HIV infection, your body can no longer fight diseases. There is **no cure** or vaccine for HIV, however there are treatments that slow HIV down and prevent AIDS. Having another sexually transmitted infection, such as chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis or herpes makes your body more open to infection with HIV.

**Remember:** *viruses spread wherever and whenever they can. Sex and sharing needles can spread virus, but these activities do not cause HIV/AIDS. A virus causes HIV/AIDS.*

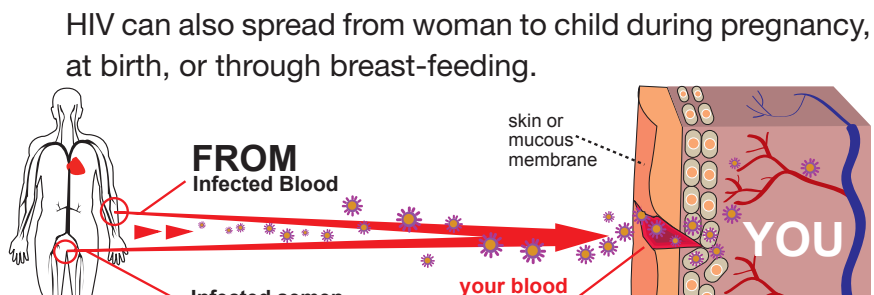
## How is it spread?

HIV is spread when infected blood, semen [cum] or vaginal fluid [pussy juice] gets into your blood, through a break in your skin or mucosa (thin, wet skin inside mouth, vagina [pussy] or rectum [inside ass]). Remember, skin or mucosa can have tiny cuts or scrapes that you can't see or feel.

### HIV is commonly spread by:

- unprotected anal or vaginal sex [screwing or being screwed in the ass or pussy without a condom],
- sharing equipment for injecting drugs (spoons, needles, syringes, water, filters).
- It may also spread by sharing needles for tattoos or piercing.

HIV can also spread from woman to child during pregnancy, at birth, or through breast-feeding.



## Can it be prevented?

**Yes.** Prevention means **reducing your risk** of getting HIV. You can avoid coming into contact with HIV by **NOT** having unprotected sex, **NOT** sharing needles or other drug injection equipment, and **NOT** sharing needles for tattooing or piercing, unless sterilized

SAFER  
NEEDLE  
USE

OVER

## What are its symptoms?

Most people infected with HIV **do not look or feel sick**, and will show **no symptoms at all** for 7 to 10 years. Early symptoms of HIV infection that sometimes appear in the weeks after infection are similar to symptoms of a cold or flu (feeling tired, swollen glands, fever).

USING  
CONDOMS  
& SAFER  
SEX

OVER

## Can it be cured?

**No.** A person with HIV carries the virus and can pass it on for their whole lives. Although medications can prolong life and reduce the spread of HIV, a person with HIV generally becomes more open to severe infections and cancers. Many people with HIV die after being very sick for a long time.

## Can it be treated?

If you are diagnosed with HIV, taking care of basic health needs (such as good food, rest and exercise) is very important to staying well. Powerful anti-retroviral drugs are available that reduce the amount of HIV in the body. These drugs can prevent AIDS, but people with HIV must take them for the **rest of their lives**. There are many side effects and long-term effects on the body are unknown.

## How can I tell if I am infected?

**HIV infection is diagnosed by a blood test.** You can get this test at one of the clinics listed below. Your name is not used. A code is attached to your blood sample. It usually takes two weeks to get your results. Rapid HIV testing is now available in some clinics. A drop of blood is taken from your finger and tested in a small plastic device. The result is visible after one minute. Positive results from the rapid test should still be confirmed with a blood sample. You might consider getting tested for these infections if:

- You or your sex partner have had unprotected anal or vaginal sex.
- You or your sex partner have used any drug injection equipment that has been used by another person.
- You have been diagnosed with another sexually transmitted infection (STI), such as chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis or herpes.
- You are pregnant. By taking anti-retroviral drugs before giving birth, the baby is much less likely to be born with HIV.
- Someone tells you that you have been in contact with HIV... or if you are worried about HIV.

WHAT IS  
PUBLIC  
HEALTH  
FOR?

OVER

## Living with HIV/AIDS

Because it is a life-long infection, people with HIV/AIDS can experience strong emotional stress, loneliness and depression. People may be afraid of spreading the virus to a sex partner, or fear rejection if they tell their sex partner they have HIV/AIDS. Good education and counselling is important so individuals can learn how to stay healthy and to prevent spreading the virus to others.

Since HIV affects the immune system, many infections such as herpes and human papilloma virus (HPV, the virus that causes genital warts) may have more severe symptoms or complications in people infected with HIV.

## HIV, STI & Hepatitis B/C

HIV is a sexually transmitted infection (STI). If you already have an STI such as chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, herpes or genital warts, you may have broken skin, swelling or sores that make it much easier for HIV to get into your body. HIV is also spread in the same way as the viruses that cause Hepatitis B and C. If you have one of these viruses, you could have others. If you are diagnosed with one of these infections, you should consider getting tested for HIV.

## Where can I go?

**Street Connections** - 705 Broadway - cell phone 981-0742  
Mobile needle exchange van operates MON.-FRI. from 5.30-11.30 pm.  
Home visits can be arranged.

You can get tested for STIs, HIV and hepatitis or get free condoms at one of these drop-in teen clinics:

**Klinic** - 870 Portage - 784-4090  
Every MON. from 4:30-8pm, except long weekends (20 and under only).  
Website: [www.klinic.mb.ca](http://www.klinic.mb.ca) email: [klinic@klinic.mb.ca](mailto:klinic@klinic.mb.ca)

**Women's Health Clinic** - 419 Graham - 947-1517  
Every THURS. from 3:30-8pm (19 and under only, boys welcome!).  
Website: [www.womenshealthclinic.org](http://www.womenshealthclinic.org)

**Nor'West Coop** - 103-61 Tyndall - 940-2020  
Every WED. from 4-5:30pm, (19 and under only).  
Website: [www.norwesthealth.ca](http://www.norwesthealth.ca) email: [info@norwesthealth.ca](mailto:info@norwesthealth.ca)

**Mount Carmel Clinic** - 886 Main - 582-2311  
Every SAT. from 12-4 pm, except long weekends (19 and under only).  
Website: [www.mountcarmel.ca](http://www.mountcarmel.ca)

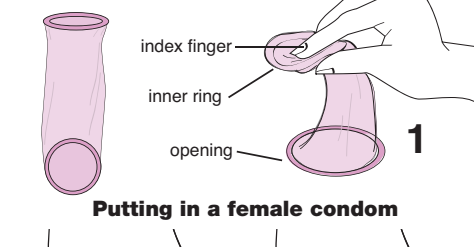
**Nine Circles Clinic** - 705 Broadway - 940-6001  
Every WED. from 1-7 pm (No age limit). Website: [www.ninecircles.ca](http://www.ninecircles.ca)

There are several other teen clinics available on a drop-in basis or by appointment, both inside and outside Winnipeg. Go to [www.serc.mb.ca/SERC/GE/WA](http://www.serc.mb.ca/SERC/GE/WA) for a complete listing of locations and times.

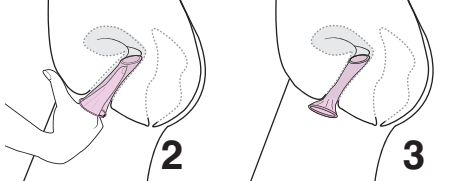
# DRUGS AIDS

## Using Condoms & Safer Sex

Condoms prevent bacteria and viruses from spreading.



Putting in a female condom



The **FEMALE CONDOM** can be put in up to 8 hours before sex. It has two rings - one at the opening and a loose inner ring that fits over the cervix. Squeeze the inner ring and push into the vagina [pussy] with your index finger. It can also be used anally [up the ass].

A **MALE CONDOM** is rolled on to the erect penis [dick]. Pinch the tip to leave a space for semen [cum]. Don't use oil-based lube (such as baby oil, vaseline or hand lotion). Oil breaks male condoms, but is safe for female condoms.



Putting on a condom

Using condoms is often called **SAFER SEX**. Besides using condoms, safer sex can mean kissing, licking, sucking, masturbating, rubbing or any sex that reduces the exchange of body fluids. **Safer sex is NOT risk-free, but having safer sex can reduce your risk.**

## Safer Needle Use

Use your own needle, spoon, water and filter for every shot.

If you do re-use any equipment, it is important to clean it with bleach (see diagram).

This method should kill HIV, but probably won't kill Hepatitis B or C. To avoid these infections, follow steps 1 and 2, then take apart your rig completely and soak in bleach for 3 to 10 minutes. Follow by steps 5 and 6.



1-2, Draw cold water into syringe, Shake syringe for 30 seconds, Do this twice, using new water.



3-4, Draw pure bleach into syringe, Shake syringe for 30 seconds, do this twice, using new bleach

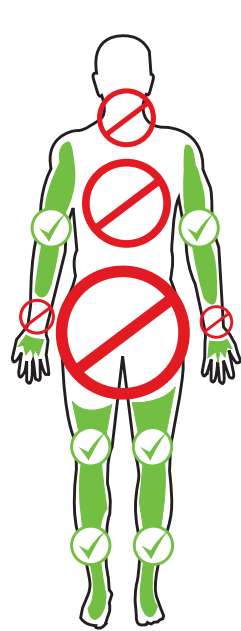


5-6, Draw cold water into syringe, Shake syringe for 30 seconds, Do this twice, using new water.

**Remember: cleaning with bleach is not as safe as using your own needle and equipment every time.**

Many people experience serious skin, blood, heart and lung problems from injecting. This is because of dirt or bacteria injected beneath the skin or into the blood. Avoid problems by **washing** hands, **sterilizing** equipment and **cleaning** skin where you inject with an alcohol swab.

- The **safest places** to inject are veins in arms, hands, legs and feet.
- Do not inject into **danger zones** such as wrists, head, neck, breasts or groin, including the genitals.
- Make sure you are in a vein by flagging [pulling a little blood into the syringe] before you shoot.
- Switch injection sites regularly to allow veins to heal and avoid clotting.
- Give your veins a holiday once in a while! Smoke, snort or eat your drugs instead.



## Drug Injection Danger Signals

If you shoot up and have any of these symptoms, seek medical help right away. **Ignoring them might be fatal!**



**Don't wait! Get medical help!**

- Fever, chills, dizziness
- Ringing in the ears
- Spots before the eyes
- Red line streaking away from an injection site
- headaches, vomiting
- difficulty breathing

## What is "Public Health" for?

The main job of public health is the prevention of illness. If you test positive for HIV/AIDS, it is important that sex partners or drug-using partners who might get these infections from you be informed and tested. This is done to

**prevent complications from these infections and to reduce the spread of these infections.**

You will be encouraged to tell your partners yourself. If you cannot, a public health nurse will tell them for you. This is confidential. **Your name will never be mentioned.**

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## Sex & Prevention

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This pamphlet series was produced as part of the Youth & STD/HIV Prevention Project at Sexuality Education Resource Centre (SERC), in collaboration with Kali Shiva AIDS Services. The original writing and design of this pamphlet series involved over 300 youth and 60 service providers. Ongoing funding for development and printing provided by the Winnipeg Foundation, Public Health Agency of Canada (AIDS Community Action Program), and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. 1st print: 1998. 2nd print: 2000. 3rd print: 2001. 4th print: 2002. 5th print: 2004. 6th print: 2006

**Call SERC at (204) 982-7800 for copies or for more info.**

## Questions Anyone?

### Phone:

Public Health STI Line:  
**940-2200**  
Health Links (Winnipeg):  
**788-8200**  
Outside Winnipeg:  
**1-888-315-9257**

### Web:

**www.serc.mb.ca**  
Or send your question to  
thefactsoflife@serc.mb.ca  
Your question will be  
answered confidentially  
within 2 working days