

# 1. What are HIV and AIDS?

**HIV:**  
Human Immunodeficiency Virus

**AIDS:**  
Acquired ImmunoDeficiency Syndrome

HIV is a virus that attacks the immune system. Eventually, the immune system may grow weak and you can become sick with different illnesses. After time, the immune system won't be able to defend your body from diseases that can lead to death. This advanced stage of HIV disease is called AIDS.

# 2. Who Can Get HIV?

**ANYONE**

- You don't get HIV because of who you are (age, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, or gender).
- You don't get HIV because of where you live.

**EVERYONE IS AT RISK.**



# 3. What You Need To Know

- One of the main **RISKS** for getting HIV is the belief that it can't happen to you. Many people don't take the threat of HIV seriously. Know the facts. Learn how to prevent HIV.
- You may think you are safe if you use condoms most of the time. You're not. **IT COULD TAKE JUST ONE TIME WITHOUT A CONDOM TO GET HIV. USE CONDOMS EVERYTIME.**
- Globally, 45% of new HIV infections occur in young people aged 15-24. You may think it's not your problem – think again.



# 4. How Do You Get HIV?

You can get HIV through activities where **INFECTED BLOOD** and/or **SEXUAL FLUIDS** enter your body.

**Risks:**

- Not using condoms during sex (vaginal, anal and/or oral sex)
  - Having multiple sex partners
  - Having another sexually transmitted infection (STI)
  - Sharing needles for drugs (including steroids), tattooing and body piercing
  - Sharing sex toys
  - Using drugs or alcohol before/during sex
- It's important to note that HIV can be passed from an HIV positive mom to her baby during birth or through breastfeeding.

# 5. How to Protect Yourself



- **CHOOSE** not to have sex (abstinence).
- Talk about **SAFER SEX** with your partner **BEFORE** you have sex.
- Use **CONDOMS**/barriers **EVERY TIME** for vaginal, anal and oral sex.
- Don't share needles.
- **TAKE CHARGE** of your own sexual health.

# GET SMART. GET TESTED.

**FREE, ANONYMOUS** HIV testing, including the **RAPID TEST** (Point of Care) is available at Peel Public Health Healthy Sexuality Clinics. Drop-in and appointment clinics available. Call Peel Public Health at **905-799-7700** for a clinic near you. No Health Card is required.

peelsexualhealth.ca  
intheknowpeel.ca

## 6. Frequently Asked Questions

### IS IT SAFE TO BE AROUND SOMEONE WHO HAS HIV?

#### YES

- Everyday contact with people who have HIV/AIDS is safe.

#### You can't get HIV through:

- Shaking hands, hugging, kissing
- Coughing, sneezing
- Mosquito, other insect or animal bites
- Water fountains, food, dishes, bed linens
- Swimming pools, toilet seats

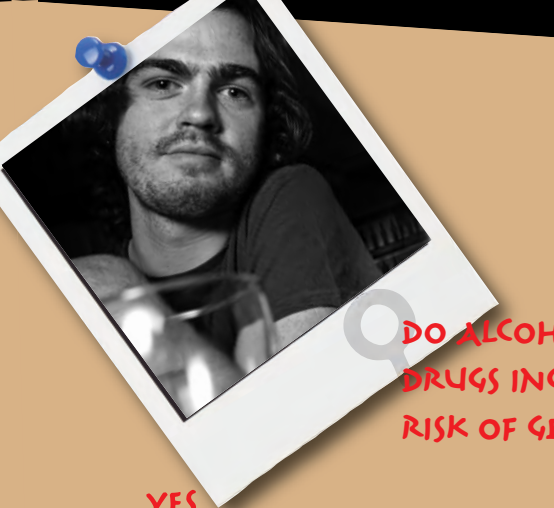
### HOW RISKY IS ORAL SEX?

- While the risk may be lower than anal and vaginal sex, oral sex is **NOT RISK FREE**.
- HIV can get into your bloodstream if...
  - You have cuts in your mouth (even small cuts from flossing, brushing and eating sharp foods like chips).
  - The skin in your mouth or on your partner's genitals is torn (even if you can't see the tear). Rough or prolonged oral sex can cause small cuts in the back of the throat.
  - You have a throat infection, sores or an STI.
- **USE CONDOMS OR DENTAL DAMS TO PROTECT BOTH PARTNERS.**

### HOW RISKY IS ANAL SEX?

#### VERY RISKY

- Unprotected anal sex is one of the highest risk activities for HIV infection.
- The **PERSON RECEIVING THE SEMEN IS AT HIGHER RISK** of getting HIV because the lining of the anus and rectum is very thin. Tiny tears in the lining can allow the virus to enter the bloodstream during sex.
- Anal sex also increases the risk of getting other STIs.
- Some young women may have anal sex to avoid pregnancy, but may not think about the need to use condoms to prevent STIs.



### DO ALCOHOL AND DRUGS INCREASE THE RISK OF GETTING HIV?

#### YES

- Alcohol and drugs won't infect you with HIV but being drunk or high **AFFECTS YOUR ABILITY TO MAKE DECISIONS**. You may be more likely to take risks like sharing needles or having unprotected sex.

### HOW RISKY IS VAGINAL SEX?

#### VERY RISKY

- Unprotected vaginal sex is one the highest risk activities for HIV infection.
- The lining of the vagina is thin and can be torn with rough or prolonged sex. Tiny tears in the lining can allow the virus to enter the bloodstream during sex.
- Young women (15 -24 years) having vaginal sex are at an increased risk of HIV infection because the cervix is still developing and more vulnerable to HIV and other STIs.
- **BIRTH CONTROL PILLS** prevent pregnancy, but **DON'T PROTECT YOU FROM HIV** and other STIs.
- The only way to protect against HIV and other STIs is to **USE CONDOMS EVERYTIME**.

## Glossary

**Anal sex:** sexual intercourse where a man's penis enters a man's or woman's anus. Having unprotected anal sex puts you at the greatest risk of getting an STI or HIV/AIDS.

**Anus:** the external opening of the rectum (bum).

**Oral sex:** a sex act that uses the mouth to stimulate the penis, vagina or anal area.

**Sexually transmitted infections (STIs):** infections you can get by having sexual contact with someone who's infected...Anyone can get an STI.

**Vaginal sex:** sexual activity where the penis enters the vagina. Having unprotected vaginal sex puts you at a very high risk of getting an STI or HIV/AIDS.

