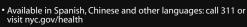
## Health Bulletin

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

#78 in a series of Health Bulletins on issues of pressing interest to all New Yorkers







• Disponible en español: llame al 311 o visite nyc.gov/health

•需要中文服務 - 可電 311 或造訪網址 nyc.gov/health



#### **Get Tested for HIV**

### If you have ever had sex, or ever injected drugs (even if only once), get tested.

- An HIV test is the only way to know if you have been infected with HIV.
- Rapid HIV tests can give results in less than an hour.
- An HIV test does *not* prevent HIV or treat HIV disease.
- It can take several weeks after you get infected for a test to show that you have HIV. If you think you may have been exposed, get another test 6 weeks later to confirm.

#### If you are NOT infected with HIV ("HIV negative"):

- Take steps to stay that way (see Protect Yourself and Others).
- If you are at higher risk (for example, if you have had recent unprotected sex or injection drug use), get tested for HIV at least once a year.
- If you are at higher risk, you should also be tested regularly for other sexually transmitted diseases. Having any STD makes it easier to get or spread HIV.

#### If you ARE infected with HIV ("HIV positive"):

Take steps to stay healthy and keep from infecting others (see If You Have HIV, It's Important to Know).

#### **Protect Yourself and Others**

### The only ways to be 100% protected against HIV are not having sex and not injecting drugs.

- If you are having sex, reduce your risk by having sex only in a mutually monogamous relationship with a partner you are sure is not infected.
- If you have sex outside of such a relationship, take these steps to reduce your risk:
- Reduce the number of people you have sex with. The more partners you have, the greater your risk especially if you don't know their HIV status.
- Always use a condom (see Use a Condom Every Time).



#### **Use a Condom Every Time**

#### Condoms protect against HIV and many other STDs.

- Use only latex, polyurethane or nitrile condoms.
- Condoms made of "natural" materials like lambskin prevent pregnancy, but they do **not** protect against HIV and other STDs.
- If you are allergic to latex, use condoms made of polyurethane or nitrile.
- Female condoms, which are placed in the vagina, are made of nitrile. They work just as well as male condoms. Never use a male and a female condom together. Some people use female condoms for anal sex.
- If you're pregnant, condoms will protect you and your baby against HIV and other STDs.
- Get free condoms. Find out where at 311 or nyc.gov/condoms.



#### **Be Prepared!**

- You have a right to insist that your sex partner uses a condom.
- Don't depend on other people to have condoms carry your own.

#### If You Have HIV, It's Important to Know

#### Take steps to protect your health.

Get medical treatment to feel better and live longer.

- See a health care provider who specializes in treating HIV.
- Call 311 for information about HIV treatment, care and other services.
- Health care is available regardless of ability to pay or immigration status.

#### If you are pregnant or planning pregnancy:

- Medicine can improve your health and protect your baby.
- Breastfeeding can transmit HIV to your baby. Talk to your health care provider for guidance.

#### You can do other things to stay healthy, for example:

- Eat healthy and be physically active.
- Get immunized against flu, pneumonia and hepatitis A and B.
- Quit smoking. For help, call 311 and ask for the Smokers' Quitline.
- Get help for depression, or for alcohol and drug problems. Talk to your health care provider or **call 311** (see **More Information**).

#### Do ask — and do tell — if you have HIV.

- Talk to anyone you have had sex with so they can get testing and counseling, too. If you need help notifying your partners, talk to your health care provider or call 311 (see More Information).
- Tell people that you have HIV before you have sex with them (even if they don't ask!).
- Get tested regularly for other sexually transmitted diseases. Having an STD can make HIV worse.
- Never have sex without a condom. Even if you take medications to treat HIV, and even if your viral load is not detectable, you can still transmit HIV.



#### **Some Activities Are Riskier Than Others**

#### According to the best available evidence:

- Injection drug users who share needles are at very high risk of getting and transmitting HIV.
- Receptive sexual partners are at higher risk. HIV can more easily enter the body through anal and vaginal tissues. But unprotected sex is risky for both partners.
- Receptive anal intercourse is by far the riskiest sexual act. Protecting
  against HIV by always using condoms is especially important for
  men who have sex with men and anyone who has anal sex.
- Oral sex carries some risk, but is much less risky than other sexual activities.
- Having unprotected sex is extremely risky. Condoms greatly reduce HIV risk for both partners in anal, vaginal and oral sex.

#### Some women are at higher risk than they think.

- Some women are at higher risk for HIV because their male partners have sex with other men, or inject drugs, without telling them.
- Unprotected vaginal sex is how 9 out of 10 women with HIV became infected. That is why condoms are so important.
- Anal sex is even risker than vaginal sex. Women who have unprotected anal sex are 30 times more likely to get HIV than from unprotected vaginal sex. Condoms are especially important for anal sex — use one every time!

#### Where to Get Tested

- You can get an HIV test from your regular doctor or health care provider.
- Many hospitals, clinics and community-based organizations also offer HIV tests. **Call 311** to find a location near you, or text your ZIP Code to Knowlt (566948).

• Free, confidential testing and treatment for STDs — including rapid HIV tests — are available at Health Department clinics in all 5 boroughs (see **More Information**).



## STAY SAFE



# **GET TESTED**









#### **More Information and Help**

- For more information about HIV and other STDs (including where to get free, confidential, or anonymous counseling and testing), call 311 or visit nyc.gov/std
- For more about condoms: Call 311 and ask for Health Bulletin #47:
   NYC Condoms, or visit nyc.gov/condoms
- For help notifying partners: Call 311 and ask for CNAP (Contact Notification Assistance Program)
- To find a needle exchange program (or get help for mental health or drug problems): Call 311 *or* LifeNet: 800-LifeNet (800-543-3638)
- Spanish LifeNet: 877-AYUDESE (877-298-3373)
- Asian LifeNet (Mandarin, Cantonese and Korean): 877-990-8585
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: cdc.gov/hiv or hivtest.org

**DIAL 311** 

#### For copies of any Health Bulletin

All Health Bulletins are also available at nyc.gov/health

Visit nyc.gov/health/email for a free e-mail subscription



#### New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

125 Worth Street, Room 1047, CN 33 New York, N.Y. 10013

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor Thomas Farley, M.D., M.P.H., Commissioner

#### **Bureau of Communications**

Geoffrey Cowley, Associate Commissioner Cortnie Lowe, M.F.A., Executive Editor Drew Blakeman, Senior Writer

Prepared in cooperation with:

Division of Disease Control, Bureau of HIV Prevention and Control

Monica Sweeney, M.D., M.P.H., Assistant Commissioner



#### STOP HIV IN NYC



For Non-Emergency NYC Services Telephone Interpretation in 170 Languages