



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

## Get Tested for HIV

Reduce risky behaviors and use condoms to protect yourself and others.

### WHAT'S YOUR STATUS?



**STAY SAFE**



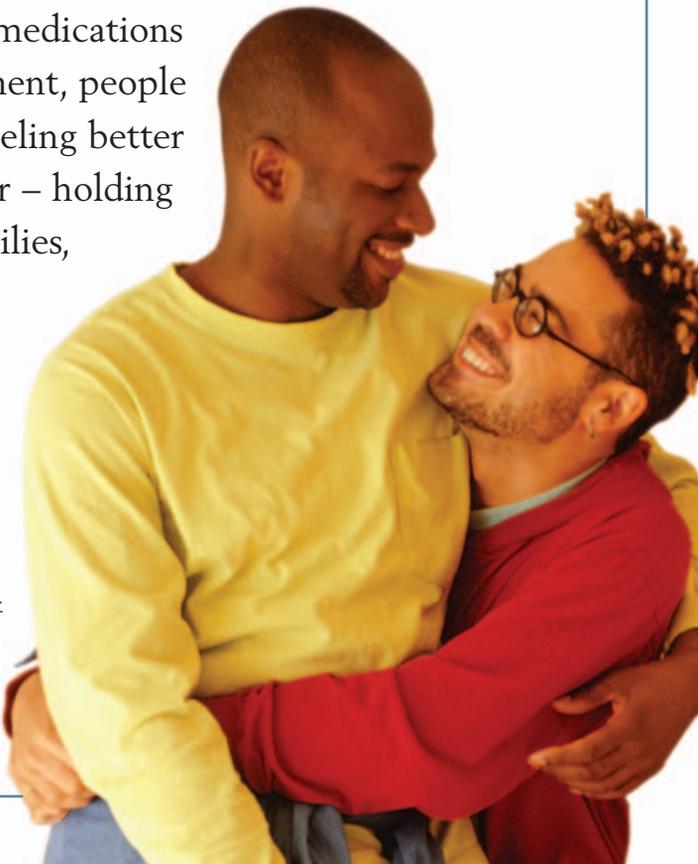
**GET CARE**



**GET TESTED**

- More than 100,000 New Yorkers are living with HIV.
- *As many as 1 in 4 don't know they're infected.*
- There is still no vaccine, and still no cure.
- Thanks to new medications and early treatment, people with HIV are feeling better and living longer – holding jobs, raising families, doing well.

- Available in Spanish, Chinese, and other languages: call 311 or visit [nyc.gov/health](http://nyc.gov/health)
- Disponible en español: llame al 311 o visite [nyc.gov/health](http://nyc.gov/health)
- 需要中文服務 - 可電 311 或造訪網址 [nyc.gov/health](http://nyc.gov/health)



## Know Your HIV Status – Get Tested

If you have ever been sexually active, or ever injected drugs (even if only once), you should be tested for HIV.

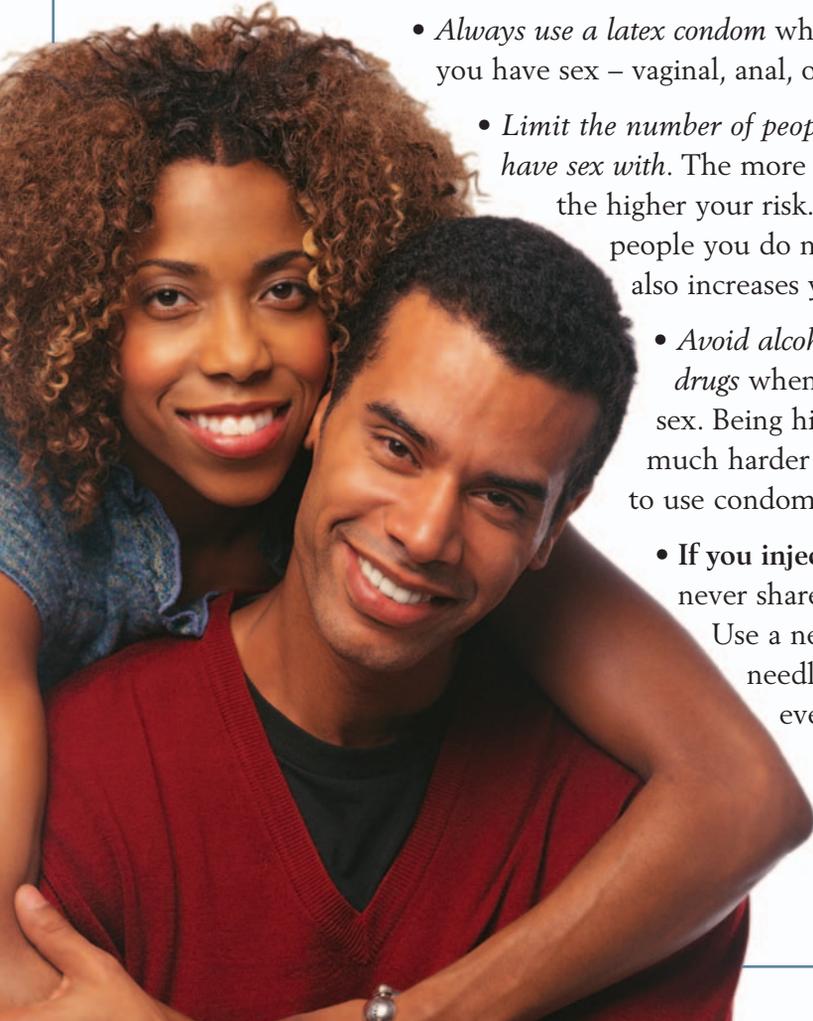
- Rapid tests are now available that give results in less than an hour.
- If you're infected, you can get medical treatment to feel better and live longer. You can also prevent others from becoming infected.
- If you're pregnant or planning pregnancy, knowing your HIV status can save your baby's life.



## Protect Yourself and Others

Not having sex and not shooting drugs are the only ways to be sure you won't get infected with HIV.

- If you are sexually active, you can reduce your risk of getting or spreading HIV 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 of getting or spreading HIV;
  - *Always use a latex condom* whenever you have sex – vaginal, anal, or oral.
  - *Limit the number of people you have sex with.* The more people, the higher your risk. Sex with people you do not know also increases your risk.
  - *Avoid alcohol and other drugs* when you have sex. Being high makes it much harder to remember to use condoms.
  - **If you inject drugs,** never share needles. Use a new, sterile needle and “works” every time. For information and help, call 311.



## B.Y.O.C. (Bring Your Own Condom)

Latex condoms protect against HIV and many other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

- Use *latex* condoms.
  - Condoms made of “natural” materials like lambskin prevent pregnancy, but *don't* protect against HIV and other STDs.
  - If you are allergic to latex, use condoms made of polyurethane or other synthetic materials.
- Female condoms, which are placed in the vagina, are made of polyurethane and also protect against HIV.



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

If you have HIV and you know it, you can take better care of your health:

- You can get medical treatment for HIV to feel better and live longer.
- And you can do other things to stay healthy, for example:
  - Get immunized against flu and pneumonia.
  - Quit smoking. For help, call 311 and ask for the Smokers' Quitline.
  - Get help for alcohol and drug problems. Talk to your doctor, call 1-800-LifeNet (1-800-543-3638), or call 311 and ask for LifeNet.

### 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 doctor or call 311 and ask for CNAP (*see More Information*).
- Tell anyone you are thinking of having sex with that you're HIV-positive *before* you have sex (even if they don't ask!).
- Never have sex without a latex condom. Even if you're on anti-HIV medications and even if your viral load is not detectable, you can still transmit HIV. Using a condom can:
  - Prevent you from becoming infected with other STDs or different strains of HIV that may be more virulent or resistant to drug treatment.
  - Prevent you from infecting the person you are having sex with.
- Never share needles or “works.”

## Some Activities Are Riskier Than Others

According to the best available evidence:

- Sharing needles is very likely to transmit HIV.
- *Receptive anal intercourse* is the riskiest sexual act – 5 times riskier than receptive vaginal intercourse and 50 times riskier than receptive oral sex.
- *Insertive anal or vaginal intercourse* is 10 times riskier than insertive oral sex.
- *Oral sex* carries some risk for both partners, but is less risky than other penetrative sexual activities.
- Condoms greatly reduce the spread of HIV for both partners in anal, vaginal, and oral sex.

## Everyday Activities Do Not Spread HIV

- HIV is spread by injecting drugs, through sexual activity, or from a mother to her baby during pregnancy or breast-feeding.
- You can't get HIV from other activities, such as donating blood, shaking hands, sharing dishes, using public toilets, playing sports, or kissing.

## Where to Get Tested

- You can get an HIV test from your doctor or medical group.
- Many community-based organization offer HIV tests.
- Free testing is available at public health clinics in all 5 boroughs (*see More Information*).
- People younger than 18 years do *not* need parental consent for counseling, testing, or treatment.

### More Information

- 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/health/std](http://nyc.gov/health/std)
- **Help to notify partners:** Call 311 and ask for CNAP (Contact Notification Assistance Program)
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:** [www.cdc.gov/hiv](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv)
- **Harm Reduction Coalition:** [www.harmreduction.org](http://www.harmreduction.org)



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Get Care



Stay Safe



Get Tested

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# Health Bulletin

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

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## New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

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### WHAT'S YOUR STATUS?

		
STAY SAFE	GET CARE	GET TESTED

## Get Tested for HIV

**DIAL  
311**

For Non-Emergency NYC Services  
Telephone Interpretation in 170 Languages