



# Guide to sexual health

all you need to know about sexual health,  
the symptoms and treatments



## making it easy to do business with us

- 1| Call **0845 2601 999** for a convenient appointment from 8.30 am to 6.30 pm
- 2| Walk in to our Central London offices at 60 Harley Street London W1
- 3| If you're unsure as to whether you're at risk of an STD or HIV and you can't decide which test you need, then call us on 08452601999, or log into our Sexual Health Forum at: [www.freedomhealth.co.uk](http://www.freedomhealth.co.uk)
- 4| Freedomhealth Guarantee. We believe our Full Sexual Health (STD) Screen is the best value out of all the UK's private clinics. If you can find a clinic that provides you with exactly the same range of tests at a lower price then we'll refund the difference.

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**60 Harley Street  
London W1G 7HA**

Call 0845 2601 999  
Appointments and Information

[www.Freedomhealth.co.uk](http://www.Freedomhealth.co.uk)

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Welcome to Freedomhealth

# Keeping you sexually fit & well

At Freedomhealth we receive many tens of thousands of enquiries and questions about Sexual Health every year. We see thousands and thousands of patients each year. There are common themes to the questions and problems.

This is the first of our new series of publications on issues you visit, email and ring us about so that you can share the information and knowledge we have. That way you can make the best choices for you.

## pioneering

Freedomhealth is a rapidly growing private medical practice and has pioneered a new way of delivering Sexual Health Services. We provide discreet, friendly, confidential advice from our smart, comfortable Central London offices at 60 Harley Street. Our reputation is built on repeatedly first-class and accurate service. We have excellent links with NHS units all over the UK and enjoy referrals from NHS Consultants all over Britain. We commonly receive patients from as far afield as Japan, Australia, Canada, the Middle East and of course every single country in Europe.



## quality and Clinical Governance

We work with some of the leading authorities in the UK such as Dr Fiona Boag and Dr Mike Youle on STD's and complex, multiple resistant HIV disease and the after effects.

Freedomhealth is trusted by so many people because our advice is clear, impartial and based on best practice. Your safety and satisfaction is paramount.

We are inspected and regulated by the UK Healthcare Commission. Our last Healthcare Commission inspection which was unannounced, revealed "high levels of satisfaction with the services on offer".

We have employed an independent Healthcare Inspectorate in the form of Buchanan Associates to ensure constant independent scrutiny of our internal processes. This, together with our Medical Advisory Panel continues to make us safer than ever for you.

Please feel free to give us all your feedback – positive and very importantly, negative, so we can try to get this right for you.

Email us at: [info@freedomhealth.co.uk](mailto:info@freedomhealth.co.uk) with your comments.

## huge increase in UK Sexually Transmitted Diseases

STD and GUM services in the UK have reached crisis point with rocketing rates of new STD diagnoses. Our doctors and nurses are fully registered with the General Medical Council and the Nursing and Midwifery Council. All our doctors have spent years working in the NHS and maintain NHS commitments.

## new Freedomhealth Services

Demand for Freedomhealth services has increased exponentially in the last 4 years and we are expanding our range of offerings to include Postal STD testing through our new STDTestingDirect services and our improved phone consultation service STDAdviceLine.

Fees are very reasonable and we are confident we provide the best value for money full Sexual Health Screen out of all the currently available private STD clinics. Check and see.



For more information on all our services visit [www.Freedomhealth.co.uk](http://www.Freedomhealth.co.uk) or call us, 8.30 am to 6.30 pm Mon to Fri on 08452601999.

Dr Séan Cummings  
MB BS, DRCOG, DFFP, T(GP), MRCGP, LLM  
Chief Executive

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## Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea

### Combined test (urine or swab from any site)

A urine test or swab from penis, vagina, anus or throat is taken and sent to our specialised laboratory. Results are usually available within 24 - 48 hours. Treatment can be given immediately if typical symptoms are present.



# Chlamydia

Chlamydia is the fastest increasing Sexually Transmitted Infection in the UK with over 109,000 cases notified in 2005. The UK Health Protection Agency identifies young people under the age of 25 as being most at risk.

Chlamydia though is a disease which may affect any age group, male or female and may lie dormant for many years. It is especially important in young people because it may cause damage to the reproductive system and may make both males and females infertile.

## what is it?

It is a sexually transmitted infection caused by the bacteria, Chlamydia Trachomatis.

## how can I get it?

Any sexual activity with someone who has Chlamydia may result in you developing it. It can live in the genital tract of both males and females, so it may live in the testes, penis and semen of males and in the vagina of females. It can also live in the throat and the rectum, so sex involving any of these sites may spread Chlamydia.

Unprotected penetrative sex – sex without a condom – may result in infection.

Oral sex without a condom or a dental dam may also result in infection.

Getting semen in your eye may also result in infection.

## how do I know if I've got it?

You may not. Upwards of 50% of the population who do have Chlamydia are unaware they have it.

Some people may get a painful or burning sensation when they pass urine; women may get bleeding between periods, abdominal pain and a discharge. Men may get a discharge.

The best way forward is to be vigilant and to get yourself checked when you have unprotected sex with a new partner. If you're having sex outside your usual relationship, make sure you protect your regular partner by getting tested before you have sex again.



## testing for Chlamydia

Testing for Chlamydia at Freedomhealth is straightforward and painless. Modern Chlamydia tests rely on taking a urine sample to test for penile or vaginal Chlamydia or painless swabs from the throat or anus. Results are back within 48 hours.

## treatments for Chlamydia

Treatment is easy once detected, with a course of antibiotics which will cure the infection.



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## Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea

### Combined test (urine or swab from any site)

A urine test or swab from penis, vagina, anus or throat is taken and sent to our specialised laboratory. Results are usually available within 24 - 48 hours. Treatment can be given immediately if typical symptoms are present.



# Gonorrhoea

Gonorrhoea is the second fastest growing bacterial STD in the UK according to the UK Health Protection Agency with again young people being most affected. Gonorrhoea is no respecter of age and people of all ages and gender can pick it up through unprotected oral or vaginal or anal sex. The number of notified cases is thought to grossly underestimate the true number because for lots of people, as with Chlamydia, there are no symptoms.

## what is it?

It is a sexually transmitted infection caused by the bacteria Neisseria Gonorrhoea.

## how can I get it?

Any sexual activity with someone who has Gonorrhoea may result in you developing it. It can live in the genital tract of both males and females, so it may live in the testes, penis and semen of males and in the vagina of females. It can also live in the throat and the rectum, so sex involving any of these sites may spread Gonorrhoea.

Unprotected penetrative sex – sex without a condom – may result in infection.

Oral sex without a condom or a dental dam may also result in infection. Rimming is a form of oral sex and may also result in infection.

Getting semen in your eye may also result in infection.

## how do I know if I've got it?

You may not. Around 50% of people don't know they have it. Of people with infections in their throats, over 90% don't have any symptoms at all. In women, if they do get symptoms then they may have abdominal pain, pain on urinating and a dirty, sometimes blood stained discharge from their vagina. In men, a dirty yellow, often profused discharge with swelling of the skin of the head of the penis is common. In men and women who have anal or rectal gonorrhoea, pain, a feeling as though there's a lump in the rectum and discharge is common.



## testing for Gonorrhoea

Testing for Gonorrhoea at Freedomhealth is straightforward and painless. Modern gonorrhoea tests rely on taking a urine sample to test for penile or vaginal Gonorrhoea or painless swabs from the throat or anus. Results are back within 48 hours. Testing for gonorrhoea also should include a painless swab to collect some discharge for analysis so that the correct antibiotic is prescribed.

## treatments for Gonorrhoea

Treatment is easy once detected, with a course of antibiotics which will cure the infection. Gonorrhoea frequently becomes resistant to antibiotics so the antibiotic of choice is carefully selected.



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### Syphilis Blood test

A small sample of blood is taken 28 days after a possible exposure to syphilis. The sample is sent to our specialised laboratory and the result returned usually in 24, sometimes 48 hours.



# Syphilis

Syphilis has returned once again and in some groups has increased hugely over the last 5 years or so, by up to 1500%. It is still fairly rare in heterosexual people but is increasingly common in gay and bisexual males. People with lots of sexual partners and people who attend sex parties are especially at risk.

## what is it?

It is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by the bacteria, *Treponema Pallidum*.

## how can I get it?

Any sexual activity with someone who has Syphilis may result in you developing it. It is highly infectious and is easily spread. Kissing, unprotected oral sex with males or females, rimming, unprotected penetrative sex may all cause transfer of syphilis.

Touching someone else's genitals or anus where there is a syphilis infection or sore – called a chancre – and then touching your own genitals or mouth may cause infection with syphilis.

## how do I know if I've got it?

A new infection with syphilis will usually give a painless, ulcer like lesion at the site of contact. This is called primary syphilis. However, these can be mysterious and will often heal on their own and disappear. If the first lesion is inside the anus or vagina or at the back of the mouth, then it is common to miss it. Secondary syphilis may then develop with a rash, general unwell feeling, a rash on the palms and soles of feet.

Be vigilant and get yourself checked when you have unprotected sex with a new partner. If you're having sex outside your usual relationship, make sure you protect your regular partner by getting tested before you have sex again.



## testing for Syphilis

Testing for Syphilis at Freedomhealth is quick and easy. A small sample of blood is taken and sent to our specialized laboratory. Results are available in 48 hours.

## treatments for Syphilis

Treatment at Freedomhealth follows UK National Guidance and usually involves injections of penicillin. These can be painful, so we add some local anaesthetic to make it easy for you.



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## Testing for NSU

NSU test for men and women involves a urine sample and a painless swab taken from the genitals.



# Non-specific Urethritis (NSU)



NSU is a common condition which results in painful or frequent passing of urine. It can be sexually transmitted, but it can also be caused by your body's own natural bacteria moving into the very tip of your urethra – the hole you pass urine through – and setting up an inflammation resulting in pain.

## what is it?

It is an inflammation of the urethra – the tube you pass urine through. It can occur through sexual activity with others where bacteria which live in their throats, rectums or vaginas may get into your urethra and cause inflammation. These can be quite innocent bacteria which end up in the wrong place. Equally, you can spread bacteria from hands into the urethra during masturbation.

## how can I get it?

Any sexual activity with may result in you developing it. It is non-specific by definition so simple throat bugs may cause problems for example.

Unprotected penetrative sex – sex without a condom – may result in infection.

Unprotected oral sex may result in infection also.

## how do I know if I've got it?

You may develop a slight discharge, especially if male. You are likely to notice discomfort when you pass urine and to want to pass urine more frequently.

Be vigilant and get yourself checked when you have unprotected sex with a new partner.

If you're having sex outside your usual relationship, make sure you protect your regular partner by getting tested before you have sex again.

## testing for NSU

Testing for NSU at Freedomhealth is straightforward and painless. A simple urine test and a painless genital swab is taken. Results are available within 48 hours.

## treatments for NSU

Treatment is easy once detected, with a course of antibiotics which will cure the infection.

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### Blood test for Hepatitis A

A small sample of blood is sent to our specialised laboratory. Results are usually available within 4 hours.



# Hepatitis A

Hepatitis A is an infection which can be spread sexually or by contaminated food and water supplies. Numbers of cases have declined markedly since the early 1990's. A very effective vaccine is available to protect people against Hepatitis A.

## what is it?

It is a viral infection of the liver caused by the Hepatitis A virus. Hepatitis means inflammation of the liver.

## how can I get it?

It can be spread by two main routes.

It can be spread sexually where the sex involves any contact with an infectious person's anus or faeces. Penetrative sex, especially without a condom, oral sex, and rimming can all spread Hepatitis A.

The other route is through foods which have been contaminated by faeces or by someone with Hepatitis A who has not been scrupulous in hand washing before food preparation.

## how do I know if I've got it?

Hepatitis A can be a very mild infection which may pass unnoticed by the patient.

More usually people will feel generally unwell with fever, headache, nausea, abdominal pain and sometimes jaundice.

Very occasionally Hepatitis A can cause a very severe infection resulting in liver failure and death. This is rare.



## testing for Hepatitis A

Testing for Hepatitis A involves taking blood samples to check liver function and also to look for Hepatitis A directly. An ultrasound scan of the liver may be needed.

## treatments for Hepatitis A

There is no specific treatment for Hepatitis A. Immunisation is easily available before developing an infection. Anybody coming into contact with someone with Hepatitis A should be offered immunisation immediately. Many doctors will combine the immunisation for Hepatitis B on this occasion.



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THE ONLY WAY IS

# UP

A once embarrassing and taboo subject, having problems getting and maintaining an erection is surprisingly common amongst men of all ages.

Dr Sean Cummings looks at the causes of Erectile Dysfunction and some of the most popular solutions.



“ There are a number of well-known conditions that worsen ED. The main ones I'm afraid, are self-induced. ”



“

Fortunately things have really progressed, especially since the meteoric arrival of the drug Viagra and its relatives Cialis and Levitra.

”

Once known as Impotence - until the rather more sensitive term Erectile Dysfunction was coined, “ED” is defined as the inability to develop or keep an erection long enough for the desired sex to occur. Failure to perform can occur during masturbation, penetration and indeed, oral sex...it really doesn't matter why the erection is desired, but if you can't reliably get one when you need one, then you have ED.

ED is probably the most common sexual problem that a man can experience, with around one in four men experiencing difficulties. ED is a term that covers a range of conditions and not simply a “dead or alive” situation! Partial erections, erections that start off strong and then fail, and erections which are fragile (in the sense that it doesn't take much to make them collapse), are common.

With younger men, the problems are often psychological, with negative and embarrassing experiences being reinforced every time the erection fails. They will usually have strong

erections, but occasional psychological problems like “performance anxiety” - where they worry whether an erection will occur, can cause erectile collapse.

Older men have a much higher rate of ED, with one US study showing that more than 50% of men between the ages of 50 and 70 have some problems. With older men, the causes are often more physical, with around 5% of those over 40, unable to develop an erection of any sort at all.

Over the last 20 years or so, the causes of erectile dysfunction have become much more widely understood. It wasn't so long ago that medical students were taught that the majority of men suffering from erectile problems, had a disease causing it! Things then went almost full circle, with the psychological argument taking full precedence. Suddenly all men with ED had “issues” which could be solved with a “jolly good chat” with a psychologist. >>

“ They work by allowing an increase in blood that flows into the penis, helping you maintain the erection for longer. ”

Fortunately things have really progressed, especially since the meteoric arrival of the drug Viagra and its relatives Cialis and Levitra. These drugs meant that no matter if the problem was physical or psychological, it was solvable and reliably so, by taking the medications.

The arrival of these medications also opened the box of shame and enabled men to discuss the issues rather more openly. As a GP in NHS practice, I would frequently have female patients come to talk to me about their sexual problems and their male partner's lack of erection.

What finally did become really very clear, was that there was a range of interacting physical and psychological elements, all having an impact on each other. Physical difficulty, caused by disease and or medications, would be compounded with the realisation that once you'd started, there was an expected outcome. This, of course, usually involved penetration and ejaculation. While women may be able to fake sexual arousal, men have an obvious disadvantage in the acting stakes!

There are a number of well-known conditions that will cause or worsen ED. The main ones I'm afraid, are self-induced. If you suffer from ED, it's well worth your while having a medical examination, as well as

some blood tests for hormone and sugar levels.

Stress is a very powerful damper of sexual functioning. Living in the 21st century often involves an accelerated blur of work, relationship and financial responsibilities. These cause stress and depression, although tackling these issues can frequently help your sex life return to normal.

Alcohol and the use of recreational drugs are also major causes of erection problems. I also love a drink, but the painful fact is that alcohol, except in small amounts, is very toxic. It's also seductive, meaning that one drink to calm the nerves before a potential sexual encounter, can lead to more and more drinks. The term "brewers droop" is an apt description of what can happen!

Depressive illnesses also encourage people to drink far too much alcohol, and the combination of the two together, frequently leads to problems in the bedroom.

Recreational drugs like ecstasy, cocaine and crystal meth often increase sexual desire and feeling of "sexiness," but conversely they can destroy the mechanics, so your hydraulics don't match up with what you're experiencing in your head!

Diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure also have a marked impact on erectile dysfunction rates.





This happens via a combination of routes, including the disease process itself and also the medications used to treat the conditions. Many medications will have an adverse effect on both libido and erectile capability.

Luckily there are now a variety of devices and medications used to treat ED. Although using medications is not ideal solution, it does virtually guarantee an erection. The medications fall into two main groups – those that are taken orally and those that are injected or inserted.

The oral meds began with Viagra (or sildenafil), the first in a group of drugs known as phosphodiesterase inhibitors (or PD5 inhibitors for short). They work by allowing an increase in the blood that flows into the penis, helping you maintain the erection for longer. It's a bit like filling a bath – if you turn the taps on full, the tub will still fill, even though the plug is out! Other drugs like Cialis and Levitra are variations on the same theme, but with their own characteristics.

Levitra and Viagra are very similar medications, in that they work promptly, with a relatively short duration of action. Cialis has a longer onset and longer overall effect – in some men up to three days. Doctors will try to tailor the medication according to your needs. If you are a man who needs an erection in

an hour's time, then Levitra or Viagra are the appropriate drugs, while for those who want a more normal sexual response, throughout the week, Cialis might be the way forward.

Other drugs include the injectable Caverject – yep, you have to inject your penis – but the upside is a fantastic stiff erection that you can hang your hat on! Muse is a little pellet, which you insert into the urethra – the pipe you pee through, before you massage your penis. It leads to a reasonable erection, but also stings and burns a little. It can also mean that someone sucking you, might end up with a rather medicinal taste in their mouth!

You can also try vacuum pumps, which are rigid penis shaped devices, slipped over the penis. Vacuum extracting the air, sucks blood into the penis, before you slip on a tight cock ring over the base, to keep the blood in. They are surprisingly popular, although they make your penis look unattractively blue! Frequent interruptions to re-inflate it, can understandably spoil that magic moment!

*Dr Sean Cummings*

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## Blood test for Hepatitis B

A small sample of blood is sent to our specialised laboratory. Results are usually available within 4 hours.



# Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B is an infection which can be spread sexually or by contaminated blood or medical supplies. Numbers of cases have declined markedly since the early 1980's. A very effective vaccine is available to protect people against Hepatitis B.

## what is it?

It is a viral infection of the liver caused by the Hepatitis B virus.

## how can I get it?

Hepatitis B has two main routes of spread. It can be spread sexually or by contaminated blood supplies or medical products like needles and syringes.

Hepatitis B is very infectious and can be spread easily from someone who is infectious.

Unprotected oral sex, penetrative sex and rimming can spread Hepatitis B infection. Not everyone who has had Hepatitis B is infectious. Most become immune and non-infectious.

Hepatitis B can also be spread by contamination of the medical blood supply, by sharing dirty needles or by being treated with inadequately cleaned instrumentation. This happens rarely in the UK but may occur in other countries especially in the developing world.

## how do I know if I've got it?

Again, rather like with Hepatitis A, the illness may take on several different forms. It may be very mild indeed and pass almost unnoticed, though this is rare. More usually people feel unwell with abdominal pain, reduced appetite, jaundice, tiredness, aching joints, pale urine and dark stools. Rarely a very severe form may occur resulting in liver failure and death.

This is rare. Symptoms may take up to six months to develop.



## testing for Hepatitis B

Testing for Hepatitis B involves taking blood samples to check liver function and also to look for Hepatitis B directly. An ultrasound scan of the liver may be needed.

## treatments for Hepatitis B

There is no specific treatment for Hepatitis B. Immunisation is easily available before developing an infection. Anybody coming into contact with someone with Hepatitis B should be offered immunisation immediately. Many doctors will combine the immunisation for Hepatitis A on this occasion.



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### Blood test for Hepatitis C

A small sample of blood is sent to our specialised laboratory. Results are usually available within 4 hours.



# Hepatitis C

Hepatitis C is an infection which can be spread sexually or by contaminated blood or medical supplies or during tattooing or body piercing – but only if non-sterile instruments are used. There is no vaccine for Hepatitis C.

## what is it?

It is a viral infection of the liver caused by the Hepatitis C virus. Around about 15% of people who develop Hepatitis C will clear the infection on their own in the first six months. The remainder will go on to a more chronic type of infection.

## how can I get it?

Hepatitis C has two main routes of spread. It can be spread sexually or by contaminated blood supplies or medical products like needles and syringes or by instruments used in body piercing or tattooing.

Hepatitis C is very infectious and can be spread easily from someone who is infectious – but generally only if there is blood to blood contact. It can be spread sexually, particularly in association with other infections. If there is no blood to blood contact eg sharing toothbrushes or razors, or sexual contact then Hepatitis C cannot be passed on.

Social contact with people with Hepatitis C does not result in infection.

Hepatitis C can also be spread by contamination of the medical blood supply although this is now very unlikely in the UK. Sharing dirty needles for injecting drugs eg crystal meth or by being treated with inadequately cleaned instrumentation may also pass on Hepatitis C.

Snorting cocaine through shared straws or rolled bank notes is thought to be an increasingly common way to spread Hepatitis C.

## how do I know if I've got it?

Again, rather like with Hepatitis A and B, the illness may take on several different forms. It may be very mild indeed and pass almost unnoticed, though this is rare. More usually people feel unwell with abdominal pain, reduced appetite, jaundice, tiredness, aching joints, pale urine and dark stools. Rarely a very severe form may occur resulting in liver failure and death. This is rare.



## testing for Hepatitis C

Testing for Hepatitis C involves taking blood samples to check liver function and also to look for Hepatitis C directly. An ultrasound scan of the liver may be needed.

## treatments for Hepatitis C

There is often no specific treatment for Hepatitis C. Sometimes treatment is offered using powerful anti-viral drugs but this will depend on how ill a person is and which type of Hepatitis C virus he or she has.



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## Blood and or swab test for Herpes Simplex I and II.

A painless swab or a small sample of blood is taken. Results are available within minutes for blood and 4 days for swabs.



# Genital Herpes

Genital Herpes is the most common ulcerative STD, with around 20,000 new cases being diagnosed each year.

## what is it?

It is a viral infection of the genitals caused by the Herpes Simplex II virus. It is similar to infection with Herpes Simplex I virus which causes cold sores but is generally much more severe than HSV I. Painful blisters or sores develop around the penis, mouth, vagina or anus.

## how can I get it?

Spread is sexual with unprotected oral, vaginal or anal sexual contact with an infected individual. Infection is highest when your sexual partner has blisters or sores. It is still possible to pick up genital herpes when your partner does not have sores, but the chances are much less. If you have unprotected sex then your partner and you may not see the sores because they may be hidden inside a vagina or anus.

## how do I know if I've got it?

Generally, the first episode of genital herpes tends to be very severe. People often develop painful lesions on the penis, vagina, or anus together with fever, flu like symptoms, headache etc. Second and subsequent attacks may occur but are usually less severe.



## testing for Genital Herpes

Diagnosis of genital herpes is usually by visual inspection by a trained doctor or nurse. Swabs from the lesions can be taken – but the lesions need virus within them to identify it. A blood test can help distinguish between Herpes Simplex I and Herpes Simplex II but is not reliable until 12 weeks have passed.

## treatments for Genital Herpes

There are good treatments for Genital Herpes which will reduce the severity of the attack and also reduce the frequency of other attacks. They involve either taking tablets or using creams or lotions which can be applied to the affected areas. Treatments will not cure genital herpes but effectively control it.



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## HIV Tests

Test from 28 days post possible exposure.  
A standard antibody test at 90 days,  
10 days post possible exposure.



# HIV

HIV is an infection which can be spread sexually or by contaminated blood or medical supplies. It is a very important illness because of the degree of disability it causes, the ease of spread and the associated social stigma.

## what is it?

It is a viral infection known to be caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus. There are two main types – HIV 1 and HIV 2. There are numerous subtypes of each.

## how can I get it?

HIV has two main routes of spread. It can be spread sexually or by contaminated blood supplies or medical products like needles and syringes.

HIV on its own is quite a fragile virus and dies easily when outside the body. Unfortunately unprotected penetrative sex is an efficient way of transmitting it. Unprotected anal and vaginal sex are very efficient routes. Anal sex is more dangerous than vaginal sex because the lining of the rectum is easily damaged and very absorbent. Receptive partners – either males or females have a greater chance of picking up HIV through unprotected sex. Circumcision seems to protect against infection with HIV.

Catching HIV through oral sex is possible though rare.

## how do I know if I've got it?

You may not. Around 70% of people will develop what is called a "seroconversion" illness where they become positive for HIV antibodies. This is often associated with high fever, night sweats, sore throat, diarrhoea, tiredness, nausea, inability to eat. Many people though are completely unaffected by the initial illness and show no signs of infection early on. They may be identified on routine testing or if they become ill for another reason.

AIDS is different to HIV. AIDS is a condition where someone with HIV has developed a particular illness which is within what is called the AIDS defining list. This has less relevance now than it did 20 years ago, because modern anti-HIV medications can treat AIDS and AIDS illnesses in a way in which they could not before.



## testing for HIV

Testing for HIV involves taking blood samples. This can be done from as early as 10 days after the risky episode using an HIV PCR Test; 28 days afterwards using an HIV DUO test and 90 days afterwards using a standard HIV antibody test such as the HIV INSTI. Further confirmatory tests may be necessary.

## treatments for HIV

There are very many anti-HIV treatments available which will very often make life normal for HIV positive people. As yet there is no cure and no immunisation.



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## HPV testing

A test for the 20 most common subtypes of HPV involves taking a painless swab from the target area.



# Human Papilloma Virus - HPV

Human Papilloma Virus is the most common viral STD in the UK with around 80,000 new diagnoses every year. The huge majority of sexually active adults will have picked up HPV early in their sexual career. The good news is that it is transient and will disappear often on its own. A vaccine may prevent re-infection.

## what is it?

It is a very common, sexually transmitted viral infection affecting specialised skin cells. There are many different forms, but the most important ones are the ones which cause the physical appearance of warts on the penis, anus or vagina and also the invisible ones which cause cancers of the cervix, vagina and vulva, penis and anal canal.

## how can I get it?

HPV is a sexually transmitted disease which is easily and effectively spread by sexual contact or sexual intercourse. Smoking will increase both the chances of developing HPV but also the chances of it recurring if you have it.

## how do I know if I've got it?

You may not. The HPV that causes the ugly external genital warts may live on the skin and not cause any problems or obvious warts at all. When it does they tend to be very noticeable and cause itchy, easy to bleed, irregular little growths on the penis or vagina or around the anus.

The more serious ones which cause cancers of the ano-genital area are invisible. Having regular cervical smears in women is essential to detect the damage they may cause.

In men who have anal sex, having regular anal smears is equally important. In HIV positive people having cervical and anal smears is doubly important.



## testing for HPV

Diagnosing genital warts is a clinical diagnosis by a trained doctor or nurse. Diagnosing the type of HPV or whether there is a cancer forming virus present, can be done by using special swabs which allow the laboratory to identify the wart virus type.

## treatments for HPV

Treatment involves destroying the wart using one or a combination of freezing, surgery, laser, diathermy, interferon creams, podophyllin paint. Treating cancerous areas is a specialised medical area. A vaccine is now available which protects against the four most common types.





# HIV

I was drunk, I was horny.  
I had unprotected sex.  
I feel like such a fool.  
I'm not eating or sleeping.  
Work's a total mess.

I don't know if they were HIV positive or negative.  
I didn't even ask for their phone number.

**I just want to get tested.  
My life's out of control.**

The clinic said that I had to wait for 3 months.  
Do I really have to wait that long?

**Same-day HIV Testing**

Reliable from 28 days

**Convenient Appointments**

Same day in most cases

**Full GP Service**

Same day in most cases



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