

How can I protect myself from HIV infection?

- It's important to avoid risky behaviour such as having sex with multiple partners, alcohol and drug abuse, and having sex without a condom.
- Use a condom and/or dental dam every time you have sex to protect yourself and your partner from contracting HIV. Female condoms can be used in anal sex for men who have sex with men. A dental dam is used as protection during oral sex.
- Test for HIV - If your result comes back negative it's advisable to come back after 3 months of taking your first HIV test.
- The period between you being exposed to HIV to the time the results come back is called the 'window period'.
- Remember even if your results come out as HIV positive, it's important to continue using protection.

For more information visit:

www.hivsa.com

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Rape is never your fault

Dealing with Rape

- No matter how many people you have had sex with before being raped, no matter how many clubs you had been to, no matter what you are wearing or how often you walk alone at night: It is NOT your fault.
- Even if the person was your friend, ex, current partner or someone you had been having sex with – if you were forced to have sex without your consent, you are not to blame.
- Being gay or lesbian, doesn't mean that you're inviting anyone to force themselves on you or to "correct" your lifestyle. There is no person, male or female, who deserves to be raped.
- Sex without your consent (no matter what the circumstance) is rape and rape is wrong.
- If you have been sexually attacked or abused, don't remain silent about it. Try not to feel guilty or ashamed because what has happened to you is not your fault.

You are not alone, there is support!

There are a growing number of support groups for those who belong to the LGBTI community. Speaking to people who understand what you're going through will help you through your own journey towards accepting your true self. Remember to go to your nearest clinic or healthcare facility to get tested, screened and have your health assessed.

OUT: www.out.org.za

Tel: (012) 430 3272

www.health4men.co.za

www.health4women.co.za

GAY AND PROUD



LGBTI

LESBIAN GAY BISEXUAL TRANSGENDER INTERSEX



What does LGBTI stand for?

LGBTI stands for LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER and INTERSEX.

Under international and South African law, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex people have the same human rights as all individuals, which include the right to non-discrimination and the right to access to health care services.

LGBTI are found in all communities across the world and constitute 10% of all the populations.

Queer: Is a self-affirming umbrella term used by some gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered persons.

Pansexual: A person who is pansexual can love sexuality in many forms. A pansexual person can love not only the traditional male and female genders like bisexual people, but also transgendered, androgynous, and gender fluid people.

What does it mean to 'come out'?

'Coming out' is when gay men and women, bisexuals, transgender and intersex people can finally accept who they are and reveal their orientation to friends and family. It means embracing your true sexuality and identity, and being proud of who you are.

People talk about 'coming out of the closet' or exiting'. You should feel no pressure from other people to come out. It's something you do when you feel ready.

It's okay to be who you are!

Some people are born straight, some people are born gay, some people are born transgendered or any other sexuality and that's just how it is. Your sexuality is one part of many parts that make you who you are.

What is gender identity?

Gender identity is not about your physical body, it's when someone emotionally identifies themselves as either male or female. It can also be when someone sees themselves as both male and female, or neither, which is also known as 'genderqueer'.

Androgyny is defined as having both male and female characteristics and traits. The term "androgyny" comes from the Greek words andros, which means man, and gyno or gyne, which means woman. A person who is androgynous does not fit into typical masculine or feminine roles that are defined by society and may have an unclear sexual identity.

Intersex is a term used to describe a person who has physical (physiological) sex characteristics that are not clearly male or clearly female. Intersexuality is not the same as behavioral or psychological androgyny.

Transgender is when your self-identity doesn't conform to traditional notions of male/female gender. By transitioning your body to match the gender you identify with emotionally, you become trans male or trans female.

What's the difference between HIV and AIDS? Isn't it the same thing?

No it's not the same thing. HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is a virus that is passed on from one person to another through direct sexual or blood contact.

AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) is the disease caused by HIV. This happens when HIV destroys the CD4 count cells and your body can't fight infections and diseases anymore.

With ART (Antiretroviral therapy) the level of HIV can be kept low. It is very important to go to your public healthcare worker at your nearest clinic, to receive information and get regularly health screened and tested for HIV.

Does being gay mean I'll get HIV?

Not at all, being gay doesn't automatically mean that you will contract or that you have contracted HIV. It's true that men-having-sex-with-men (MSM) are at higher risk when it comes to contracting HIV but vaginal sex is still the most common way HIV is spread.

Can lesbians also get HIV?

While it's unlikely that a woman will contract HIV while having sex with another woman, it's not impossible. Let's say one woman had sex with an HIV-infected man or woman before, or perhaps one woman contracted HIV through sharing a needle with an infected person, she could still give her partner HIV through vaginal or other bodily fluids being shared (during unprotected sex), blood from menstruation or blood from cuts/bruises on the vagina. Sharing of sex toys is also risky.

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