



## Have You Tested?

Sexual Health Information for men who have sex with men.

HIV is a serious chronic illness that affects the body's immune system and requires treatment and management for life.

- ✓ You can have HIV and not have any symptoms.
- ✓ The only way to know if you have HIV is to get tested.
- ✓ If you are sexually active, go for a regular sexual health check-up.
- ✓ Get a free check-up at GMHS STI Clinic or your nearest STI Clinic.

## HIV Transmission

HIV is found in:

- ✓ Blood
- ✓ Rectal Secretions\*
- ✓ Breast Milk
- ✓ Semen
- ✓ Vaginal Fluid

\* a natural mucus that is found in the anus/rectum.

**Anal Sex, without a condom, remains the most common way HIV is transmitted between two men.**

You can also get it through:

- ✓ Unprotected vaginal sex.
- ✓ Unprotected oral sex: presents as a low risk of transmitting HIV, but the risk is higher if a person has cuts or open sores in the mouth, cheeks, gums or throat.
- ✓ Blood to blood contact: for example using contaminated needles, or blood transfusions in countries where blood is not screened.
- ✓ Mother to baby: during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding.

# HIV Prevention

The sexual transmission of HIV may be prevented by safer sex practices.

- ✓ Always use condoms and lube for anal and vaginal sex.
- ✓ Always use condoms or dental dams for oral sex.
- ✓ Do not share sex toys.
- ✓ Learn about PEP: a medical treatment option available that may prevent HIV infection if a person has had a recent sexual exposure to HIV (see [www.Man2Man.ie](http://www.Man2Man.ie) for more information).

## ✓ Get Tested!

Having another STI can increase the chances of acquiring or transmitting HIV infection.

# The HIV Test

HIV (and STI) testing is confidential.

## Regular Blood Test for HIV:

This is the most common test at STI clinics in Ireland. Results times can vary between clinics, but usually will be available between 1 to 2 weeks.

## Rapid Testing for HIV:

This is by an oral swab or by finger prick. If there is a reaction, a regular blood test is always required to see if this is a positive result for HIV. A reaction result usually takes twenty minutes to show up.

## The Window Period:

It can take from one to twelve weeks after exposure for HIV to show up in a person's bloodstream. If you test during this period you will be advised to return for further tests if needed and to practice safer sex in the meantime.

# Free HIV & STI tests are available at:

## GMHS STI Clinic

Baggot St. Hospital, Dublin 4.  
Walk-in Tues and Weds  
Doors Open 5pm to 6:30pm.  
Tel: 01 6699 553 SMS: 087 9410 934  
[www.gmhs.ie](http://www.gmhs.ie)

## Your Nearest STI/GUM Clinic

See [www.Man2Man.ie](http://www.Man2Man.ie) for a list.

## [www.Man2Man.ie](http://www.Man2Man.ie)

For more information on HIV and STIs in Arabic, English, French, Irish, Mandarin, Portuguese, Polish, Spanish and Russian.

## Sexual Health Information & Support

Gay Switchboard Ireland  
Tel: 01 872 1055 (seven days a week)  
Email: [ask@ghn.ie](mailto:ask@ghn.ie)

