



How to Protect Yourself from Getting HIV Through Drug Use

One of the most common ways people get HIV is by injecting drugs and sharing needles with other people. If you inject drugs, it's important to take steps to protect yourself from getting HIV.

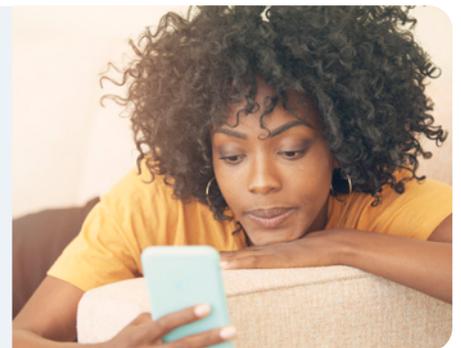
How does drug use put me at risk for HIV?

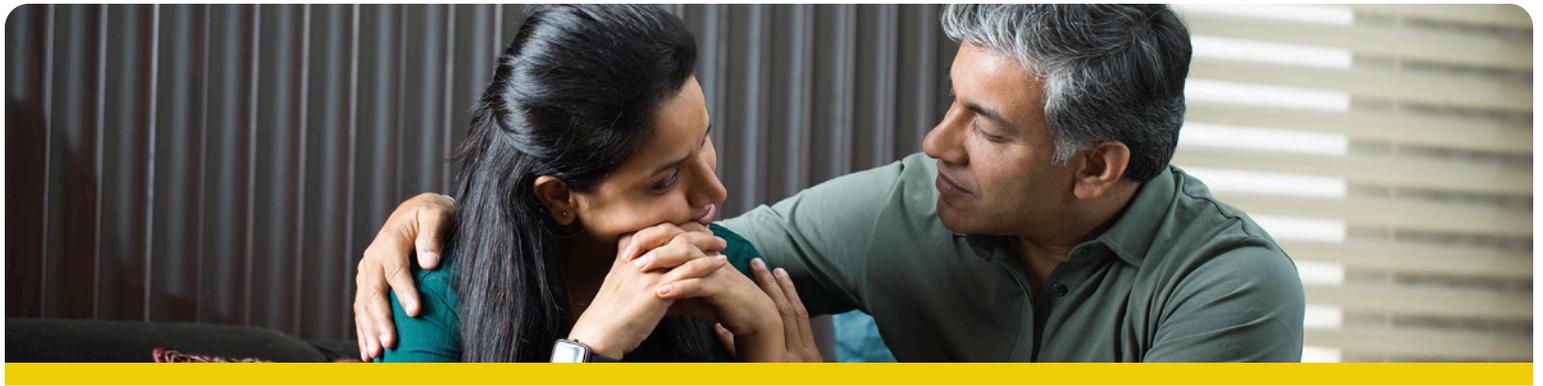
Needles and “works” (the equipment used to prepare drugs) can have other people's blood in them, and blood can carry HIV. That means if you share needles or works with someone who has HIV, you could get it, too.

When people inject drugs, they're also more likely to make other decisions that can put them at risk for HIV — like having sex without a condom.

Get help quitting

If you need help dealing with a drug or alcohol problem, call **800-662-HELP** (800-662-4357). You can also find treatment near you by visiting [findtreatment.samhsa.gov](https://www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov) and entering your address, city, or ZIP code.





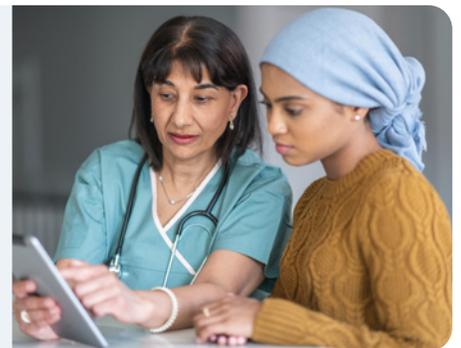
How can I lower my risk of getting HIV through drug use?

The only way to know for sure that you won't get HIV through drug use is to stop injecting drugs. But if you keep injecting drugs, take these steps to protect yourself from getting HIV:

- **Take PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis).** PrEP is a medicine for people who are at risk for HIV but don't have it. If you take PrEP every day, it's very effective at preventing HIV. Talk with your doctor to learn more about PrEP.
- **Use new, clean needles and works.** Some communities have needle exchange programs where you can get new needles. To find a needle exchange program near you, visit nasen.org/map. You can also buy needles without a prescription at some pharmacies.
- **Clean used needles with bleach** if you can't get new ones. Keep in mind that bleaching needles may lower your risk, but it's still possible to get HIV. To learn how to clean and bleach needles correctly, visit thewellproject.org/hiv-information/cleaning-equipment-injecting-drugs.

Get tested for HIV

If you're at risk of getting HIV, it's important to **get tested for HIV at least once a year**. Visit gettested.cdc.gov or call **800-CDC-INFO** (800-232-4636) to find HIV testing near you, including places that offer free or low-cost tests.



To learn more about HIV, visit:
nmlm.gov/guides/HIV-AIDS-Online-Resources