

## HIV - Women

---

### Description:

The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is the virus that can lead to Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

The number of women with HIV infection and AIDS has been increasing worldwide.

Stereotypes associated with HIV/AIDS can prevent women, and their healthcare providers, from seeing themselves at risk for HIV infection. AIDS is not a gay or straight or a male or female disease. AIDS is a human disease.

### Practical Advice

To reduce the risk of HIV transmission:

- Practise safe sex. Always using condoms when you have vaginal or anal sex is the best way to reduce your risk of getting HIV through sexual contact. Using water-based lubricant with condoms is recommended.
- Oral sex with either a man or woman represents only a small risk for the transmission of HIV/AIDS but may still represent a risk for the transmission of other sexually transmissible infections (STIs). To avoid the risk of transmission of HIV or STIs, if you are giving a man oral sex (his penis in your mouth), he should wear a condom if you are giving a woman oral sex you should use a dental dam. Whether you are male or female, if you put your mouth in contact with your partners anus or vulva while having sex, you should use a dental dam.
- If you choose not to use a condom or dam, to reduce the risk of the transmission of HIV avoid oral sex if you have bleeding gums or ulcers and immediately after cleaning your teeth.
- If you are having unprotected sex, talk to your sexual partner about the risks involved. From a good discussion with your partner, you may be able to come to a clear agreement about using condoms.
- Do not reuse or share dirty needles. Clean needles with a bleach solution before reusing them or use fresh needles each time.
- Get tested if you are pregnant or considering pregnancy. HIV positive mothers can pass the virus to their babies while pregnant, during birth, or by breastfeeding. Advances in treatments have significantly reduced the risk of a baby getting HIV from its mother when precautions are taken.

### Other Resources

- [Queensland Health Sexual Health website](#) - [Animated Movies](#) - HIV and the immune system
- [Positive Directions](#)
- [Queensland Positive People \(QPP\)](#)
- [Queensland AIDS Council \(QuAC\)](#)
- [Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations \(AFAO\)](#)
- [National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS, Australia \(NAPWA\)](#)
- [Positive Women](#)

### Related Content

[HIV/AIDS fact sheet](#)

[Safe sex fact sheet](#)

### Footnotes

[National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases](#)

[Positive Women](#)

## HIV - Women

---