

Sex & Drugs

Some people chose to use recreational drugs during sex. Mind altering substances can heighten sexual pleasure but they can also lead to lowered inhibitions. Here are some steps you can take to stay safe and reduce the chances of passing or receiving HIV/HCV if you're using drugs:

Always use clean paraphernalia: If you chose to snort drugs, use your own straw or bumper. Rolled up sticky notes make single-use disposable straws. If you smoke drugs, don't share your pipe/mouthpiece with others. If you inject drugs, always use clean supplies before each use (syringe, cooker, filter, water, alcohol swabs, tourniquets).

Condoms: Using condoms consistently and correctly significantly reduce your chance of getting or passing HIV and other STI's.

Risk of Transmission:

Fluid + Route + Activity = Risk of Transmission

HCV: Hepatitis C Virus

Hepatitis C (HCV) is a blood-borne pathogen that harms of the liver. The liver breaks down toxins, aids in digestion, filters blood, metabolises drugs, and more, making it an important organ in the human body.

HCV has a **cure**, but **no vaccine**, and can only be transmitted through blood.

Many people can live 20-30 years without any negative effects from the virus, and still transmit it to other people, making it important to get tested regularly.

Consent

Consent is an important and necessary part of sex. Consent is not a one-time thing, it's an ongoing process that is allowed to change at any time.

Consent is for everyone. It means feeling safe and comfortable with what is going on. Having open conversations with your partner can be a way of making sure consent is asked for or given for anything that happens during sex.

Consent means that you are allowed to change your mind or stop any activity at any time.

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a blood-borne pathogen that weakens the immune system.

HIV can only be transmitted through the following fluids: blood, breastmilk, vaginal fluid, rectal fluid, semen(including pre-cum).

There is no cure and no vaccine . Once someone has HIV it is for life. However, HIV treatment that is adhered to can suppress the virus to an undetectable level

Safer Sex Supplies

Barriers such as condoms (external and internal), oral dams, and lubricants will reduce the risk of transmission by preventing the spread of the virus and by decreasing tearing to the mucus membrane.

All Information obtained from and for further information go to: www.catie.ca