

# HIV, HCV AND SAFER SEX BEST PRACTICES

## Safer Sex is...

- About knowing your options.
- For everyone - no matter your age, race, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, number of partners, relationship status or whether you've been diagnosed with an STI before.
- Being comfortable with what you're doing and being able to talk to your partners about what you do and don't want.
- Sex that considers your plans around pregnancy.
- About choosing options that lower the chance of passing or getting STIs and keep you and your partners healthy.
- Taking steps to get tested for STIs if you are sexually active and getting treatment if you are diagnosed with an STI.
- Fun, stimulating, exciting and erotic.

### RISK OF TRANSMISSION:

**FLUID + ROUTE + ACTIVITY = RISK OF TRANSMISSION**

## HCV-Hepatitis C Virus

Hepatitis C (HCV) is a blood-borne pathogen that harms 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.



**NORTHREACH**

## Talking about sex and consent

Talking to your partners about sex can be a way of making sure that consent is asked for or given for anything that happens during sex. Consent is for everyone. It means feeling safe and comfortable with what is going on. Consent is not a one-time thing—it is an ongoing process. It also means you have the right to change your mind or stop any activity that does not feel safe at any point. Consent is an important and necessary part of sex. Talk to your partners about what feels safe for you and them.

## 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.

All Information obtained from and for further information go to:

[www.catie.ca](http://www.catie.ca)