

# Partner Notification

## Who is considered a partner?

Partners are:

- **People you have sex with.** This includes vaginal, anal or oral sex.
- **People you have shared needles or works with** to inject drugs, hormones, steroids or even vitamins or medicine.

Your partners need to know that they **may have HIV** and that they should **get an HIV test**. Once you tell your partners they can get tested for HIV, they can also get medical care if they have HIV, and learn how to prevent giving HIV to others.

## Should I tell others about my HIV?

It is a good idea to tell your health care providers so they can give you the proper medical care. If you like, you may want to tell family or friends. They can help support you as you get used to living with HIV.

# Partner Notification

## How can I prepare to tell my partner that he or she has been exposed to HIV?

<p><b>Step 1: Weigh the pros and cons.</b></p>	<p>There are many reasons some people choose to tell their partners themselves. Telling your partner allows you to be open about your HIV infection and offer support as your partner gets the HIV test and learns the results.</p> <p>For some it may be better to have someone else tell your partner. You may want to consider having someone else tell your partner if you don't know how the person will react or think your partner may get angry and hurt you or someone else.</p>
<p><b>Step 2: Be ready to share facts about HIV.</b></p>	<p>Your partner will probably have questions after you tell them you have HIV. You should be prepared to share some basic information about how people get HIV, how and where to get tested for HIV, the difference between HIV and AIDS and how to prevent the spread of HIV.</p>
<p><b>Step 3: Decide if you want help.</b></p>	<p>Even if you want to tell your partner yourself, you do not have to do it alone. Sometimes it is helpful to have someone support you who can help answer any questions your partner may have about HIV, and help you in case your partner gets angry. If you want help, you should determine whose help you would like and ask if that person is willing. Some ideas can include your HIV case manager, doctor, counselor, or patient navigator.</p>
<p><b>Step 4: Find the right time and place.</b></p>	<p>When and where you talk to your partner can make a big difference. Think carefully about the right place and time to tell your partner.</p> <p>Try to find a place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• where you and your partner will feel comfortable</li> <li>• that offers some privacy</li> <li>• where you can feel safe and get help if necessary</li> </ul> <p>Talk to your partner at a time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• when you will be able to say all you want to say</li> <li>• when your partner can respond and ask questions</li> <li>• when your partner can schedule an HIV test</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 5: Plan what you will say.</b></p>	<p>You may be nervous when the time comes to talk to your partner and you may have a hard time remembering what you want to say. Planning and practicing what you want to say can help you communicate clearly to your partner.</p> <p>However you choose to tell your partner, the most important thing to say is: I have HIV, you may also have HIV, and you should get tested.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are lots of other things you may want to say. Think about, discuss and write down your ideas.</li> <li>• What was helpful to hear when you first tested positive? What are some sentences or phrases you want to say? How would you put them together?</li> <li>• Acting out the situation will help you when the time comes. If you have someone you trust, role play and practice what you want to say with that person.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 6: Prepare for a reaction.</b></p>	<p>It is difficult to know how your partner will react. Think about some possible reactions and then plan how you would handle each situation. Just remember that you are sharing this information because you want to protect your partner's health.</p>
<p><b>Step 7: Get support.</b></p>	<p>It is also difficult to know how you will feel after telling your partner. Identify someone whom you can talk to for support after you tell your partner. A counselor or HIV case manager can help you cope with your own feelings and reactions.</p>