

# HIV And Injecting Drugs 101

Sharing needles or works puts people who inject drugs at high risk for getting HIV.

## Can I Get HIV From Injecting Drugs?



Yes, if you share needles or works like spoons, cookers, cottons, or water with someone who has the virus. Sharing can transfer blood from person to person, and blood can carry HIV.



Also, when you're high on drugs, you're more likely to take risks with sex, which can increase your risk for getting HIV.

## How Can I Lower My Risk Of Getting HIV?

The best way is to stop injecting drugs. To find a treatment program to help you quit, visit [www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov](http://www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov) or call 1-800-662-HELP (4357).

If you choose to inject drugs, here are some ways to lower your risk for HIV:

- Use new, sterile needles and works every time you inject, and never share needles or works.
- If you do share needles, always clean used needles with bleach and use sterile water to prepare drugs.
- Use condoms the right way every time you have anal or vaginal sex, or choose activities with little to no risk like oral sex. Abstinence is the only 100% effective way to prevent HIV.



- Take pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP, a daily medicine that can reduce your chance of getting HIV. Ask your health care provider if PrEP is right for you.
- If you think you've been exposed to HIV within the last 3 days, ask a health care provider about post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) right away. PEP can prevent HIV, but it must be started within 72 hours.

## Where Can I Get New, Clean Needles?



- Many communities have syringe services programs that give out new, clean needles, bleach kits, and other supplies. To find one near you, visit [nasen.org/directory](http://nasen.org/directory).
- Some pharmacies sell new, clean needles.
- In some places, doctors can write prescriptions for new, clean needles.



For more information please visit [www.cdc.gov/hiv](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv)