LET'S STOP HIV TOGETHER

How Do You Let Your Partners Know They May Have Been Exposed to HIV?

If you have been diagnosed with HIV or another STD, Partner Services can provide you with free and confidential services to improve your health and protect your sexual and drug injection partners.

Learn more at: cdc.gov/StopHIVTogether.

CDC

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Ending the HIV Epidemic

What Is Partner Services?

Partner Services provides free and confidential services to people diagnosed with HIV or other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs, like syphilis, gonorrhea, and chlamydia) and their partners. Through Partner Services, health department staff members help find sexual or drug injection partners so that they can be informed of their potential risk of being exposed to HIV or another STD. Partner Services then provides sexual or drug injection partners who are at risk with testing, counseling, and referrals for other services. All steps of Partner Services can be provided without revealing your identity if you choose.

How Can Partner Services Help You?

- Ensures that your sexual or drug injection partners know of their possible exposure to HIV or another STD without using your name.
- Ensures that trained health department staff members contact your partners and inform them of their potential risk of being exposed to HIV or another STD.
- Coaches you on how to let your sexual or drug injection partners know about their potential exposure, if you choose to do so yourself.
- Helps your sexual or drug injection partners get tested quickly and, if they test positive, get into care quickly.
- Presents another free resource for education and counseling for you to live a healthy life with HIV.

Importance of Partner Services

- Helps individuals who just found out they have HIV to quickly get into medical care and on treatment to improve their own health and protect their sexual and drug injection partners from HIV transmission.
  - People with HIV who take HIV medicine as prescribed and get and keep a suppressed or undetectable viral load (or stay virally suppressed) have effectively no risk of transmitting HIV to their sexual partners who are HIV negative.
  - It's unclear whether getting and keeping an undetectable viral load prevents HIV transmission to others through sharing needles or other drug injection equipment. It very likely reduces the risk, but it's unknown by how much.
- Provides people diagnosed with HIV with information about other support services for people with HIV, many of which are free.
- Offers you information about other ways to prevent HIV transmission, like condom use, reducing high-risk sexual and drug injection behaviors, and prescribing PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) to your partners.

Reportable Diseases

Health care providers are required by law to confidentially report some diseases to their local or state health department. These usually include HIV, syphilis, gonorrhea, and chlamydia. If you test positive for one of these diseases, you may be contacted by someone from the health department. Sometimes this may happen before you have a chance to talk with your health care provider about your test results.

If you are notified by your local or state health department about a positive test result for one of these diseases, contact your health care provider right away. Your health care provider will be able to give you information on treatment and care and how to protect your sexual and drug injection partners.

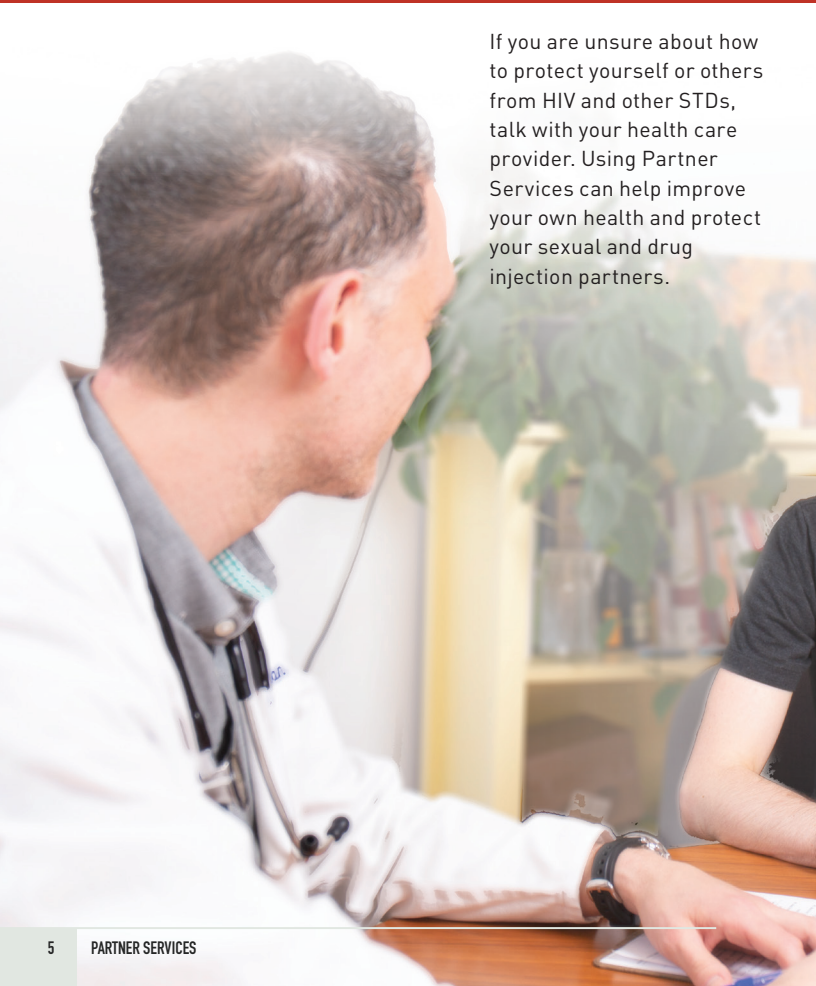
Ways to Inform Your Partners

If you have been diagnosed with HIV or another STD (syphilis, gonorrhea, or chlamydia), it is very important to let your sexual or drug injection partners know that they may have been exposed. There are a few ways to do this.

1. **Health Department Tells Your Partners**
   - You provide your partners' contact information to the health department.
   - Your partners are located and made aware of their potential exposure by health department staff; health department staff members do not use your name.
   - Your partners may receive counseling, testing, treatment, and other services at the health department, or they may be referred to HIV treatment and care.
2. **You Tell Your Partners**
   - You take on the responsibility of letting your partners know of their possible exposure.
   - You provide them the information on local services, including counseling and testing.
3. **Both You and the Health Department Tell Your Partners**
   - You and health department staff let your partners know of their potential exposure.
   - Health department staff members are there to help you during the process and to provide your partners with information and access to counseling, testing, and other resources.

Prevention and You

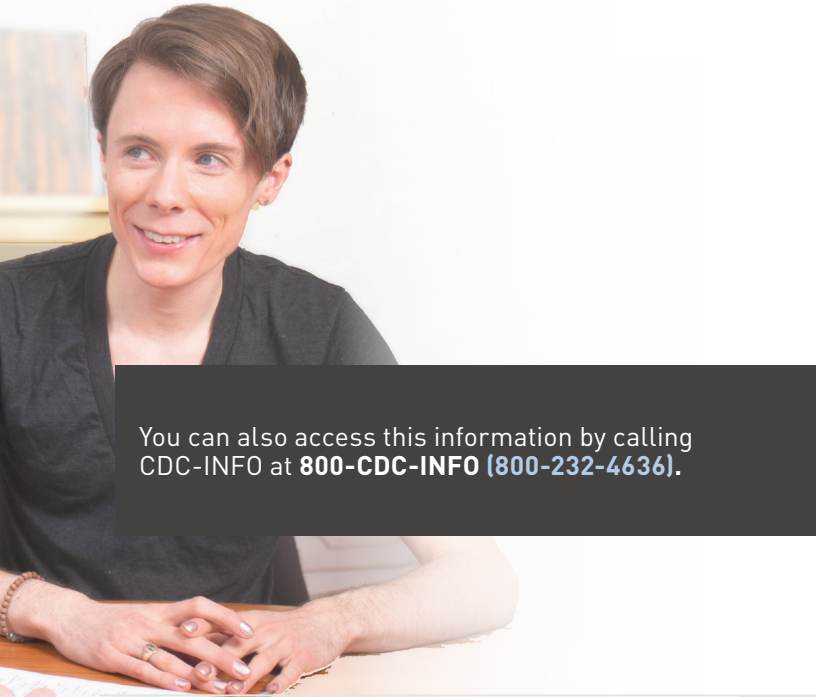
If you are unsure about how to protect yourself or others from HIV and other STDs, talk with your health care provider. Using Partner Services can help improve your own health and protect your sexual and drug injection partners.



Resources

Access the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's **HIV Risk Reduction Tool** to learn more about your risk of getting HIV or transmitting HIV to someone else. This tool delivers information that is individually tailored to you and provides an assessment of your HIV risk and how to lower that risk. Visit: **hivrisk.cdc.gov**.

For more information about HIV transmission, as well as myths and misconceptions about HIV, talk with your health care provider and visit **cdc.gov/hiv**, where you will find FREE patient information.



You can also access this information by calling CDC-INFO at **800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636).**

LEARN MORE AT

CDC.GOV/STOPHIVTOGETHER

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