

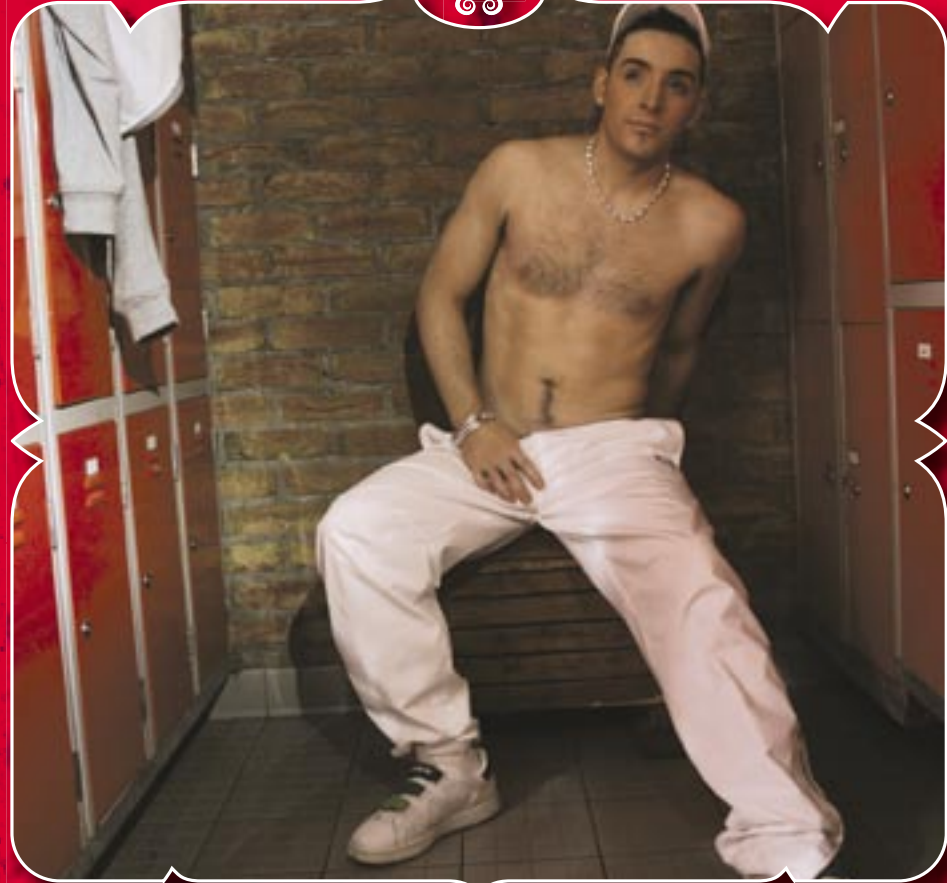


PLAY SAFE

PLAY SEXY

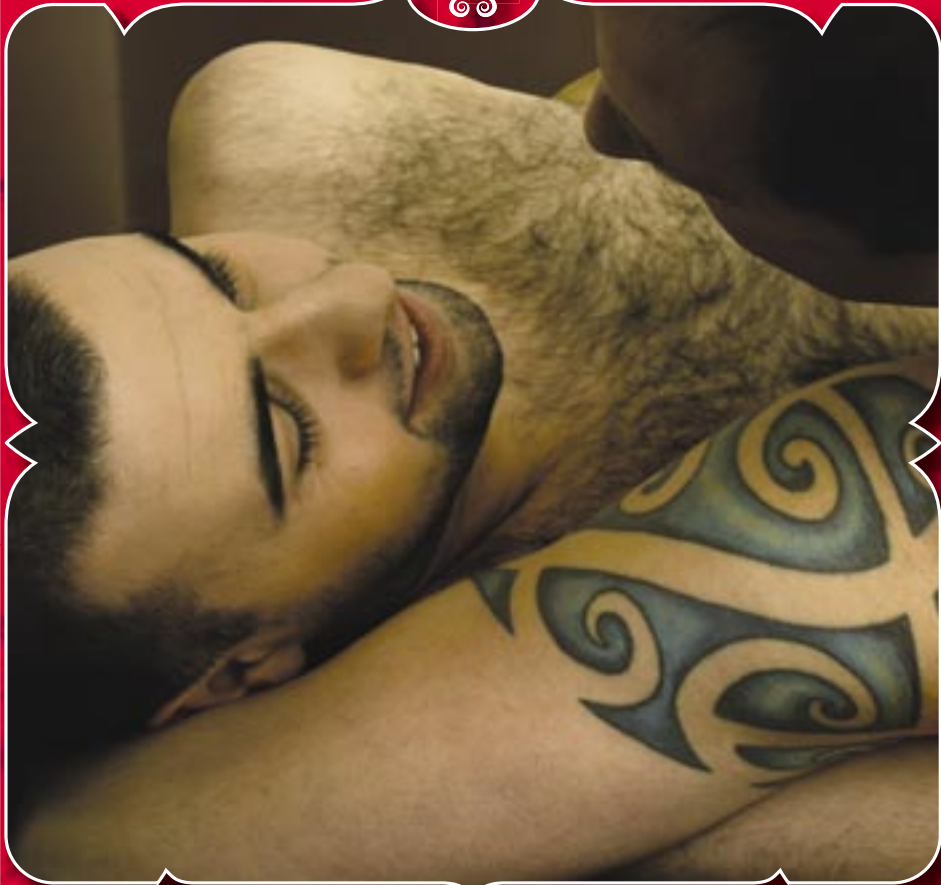


SAFER SEX AND HIV INFORMATION FOR GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN



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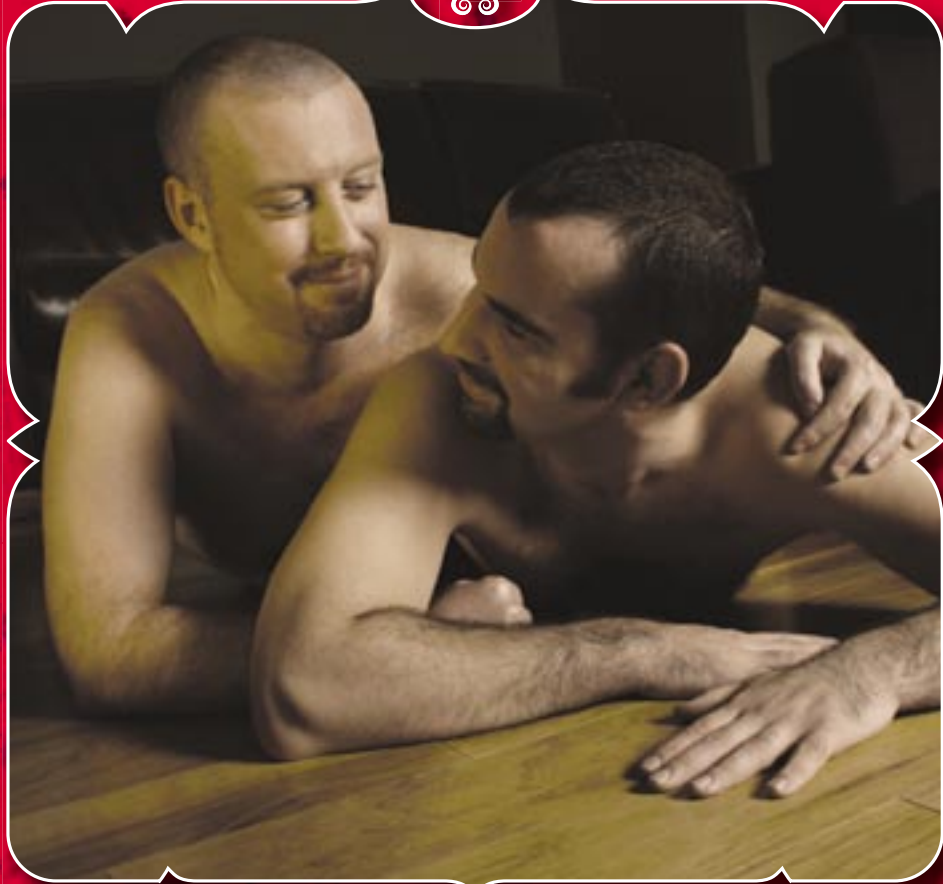
PLAY SEXY

Sex between men can offer a limitless variety of pleasure with different levels of risk involved. This booklet mainly deals with HIV and safer sex. We hope it will give you some ideas about getting the sex you want safely, whether you are HIV negative (HIV-) or positive (HIV+).

Why should HIV still be an issue for me?

1 in 2 gay and bisexual men have not tested for HIV and gay health research in Ireland (Vital Statistics and Real Lives) shows that over 40% of men who have sex with men have not tested for HIV. This means, unless you or your sexual partner has tested recently, you really don't know if either of you is HIV- or HIV+.

SEX YOU WANT SAFELY



PLAY SAFE

HIV is a serious, long-term chronic illness; it can affect your life greatly; medically, emotionally and indeed, socially and may lead to AIDS. There is **no cure** for HIV or AIDS. Safer sex practices and not sharing drug-using equipment are the best ways to avoid infection.

But many of us have taken risks, made mistakes or assumptions that we or our sex partners didn't have HIV. Having an HIV test is the only way to know for sure if you have HIV. See the GHN booklet "In The Know" for details on HIV testing.

**THERE IS NO CURE FOR HIV OR AIDS
PRACTICE SAFER SEX**



WHAT IS HIV?

HIV means Human Immunodeficiency Virus. If left untreated, it can greatly affect your health and may develop into the condition known as AIDS. When HIV enters the bloodstream it begins to attack the immune system. Your immune system can become so damaged that it no longer fights off infections and cancers. AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) is the term used to describe these unusual symptoms or cancers in HIV+ people. HIV is not AIDS.

How does someone get infected with HIV?

HIV is transmitted in blood, semen (sperm, cum or pre-cum), vaginal fluids or breast milk. Having other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) can increase the chances of becoming infected with HIV.

In Ireland, having unprotected sex (sex without using a condom) or sharing needles are the most common ways in which people get HIV.

3 things have to happen for HIV to be passed on

- 1: A person has to be HIV+ and
- 2: HIV has to get out of their body (in their blood, semen (sperm, cum or pre-cum), vaginal fluids or breast milk) and
- 3: HIV has to be able to get into another person's bloodstream.



WHAT KIND OF SEX?

Anal Sex

If you have sex where one of you is HIV+, the virus can be passed on through fucking or being fucked without using a condom or if a condom is used and it bursts or slips off. HIV can be easily transmitted through the lining of the anus, or through the head of the penis into your bloodstream. Using condoms and plenty of water-based lubricant (such as 'Wet Stuff', 'Liquid Silk', 'Pasante', 'TLC' or 'KY') when fucking are the only ways to reduce the risk of HIV transmission.

Oral Sex

A small number of men have contracted HIV through oral sex (cock sucking). The risk for oral sex is not as high as the risk for unprotected anal sex (fucking without a condom) but there is still a small risk. HIV can be passed on when a HIV+ person cums inside another person's mouth. Having sores, ulcers, bleeding gums or another STI (in particular, Syphilis) can increase the chances of catching HIV. Never brush your teeth before performing oral sex as it may cause tiny cuts on your gums. Rimming (mouth to anus) or licking arse is only a risk for HIV if blood is present.



Using Sex Toys

Sharing sex toys such as vibrators or dildos can help the spread of HIV. If you share sex toys, cover them with a condom before use and change the condom between sharing. Always wash the sex toy thoroughly after use.

Blood Contact

Open cuts, sores or blood can assist HIV transmission. Sharing blades, needles, piercing equipment or using hands or fists without gloves can be risky. You cannot get HIV by giving blood. In Ireland, there is no risk from blood transfusions because donated blood is screened for HIV.

USE CONDOMS OR LATEX GLOVES



Rough Sex, Fetishism, S&M

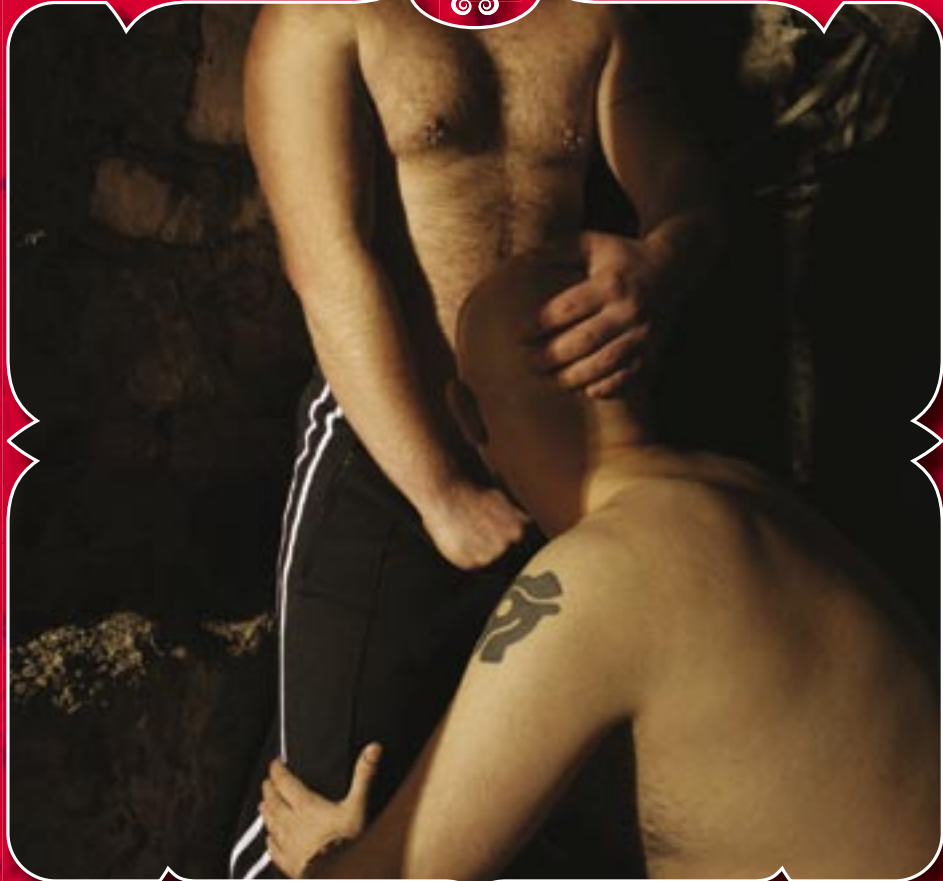
Whatever your sexual activity, you can still be safe in what you are doing. Rimming, watersports, spanking, scat, sex toys, whipping, stroking, shaving, bondage (tying up), fisting, pain and pleasure are only risky for HIV if blood is present and if hands or tools are shared. Knowing your limits and having signals are ways to keep it safe. Visiting websites can give more details on safer play.

Sex with women

Some gay and bisexual men also have sex with women. If you have vaginal or anal sex, use condoms and water-based lubricant. It is possible to get HIV from semen (cum), vaginal fluids (juices, cum) or blood. Condoms can also protect from other STIs and pregnancy. Fucking between the legs near the vagina without using condoms can result in pregnancy. Oral sex (going down) could be a risk for HIV if there is blood present.

KNOW YOUR LIMITS

KEEP IT SAFE

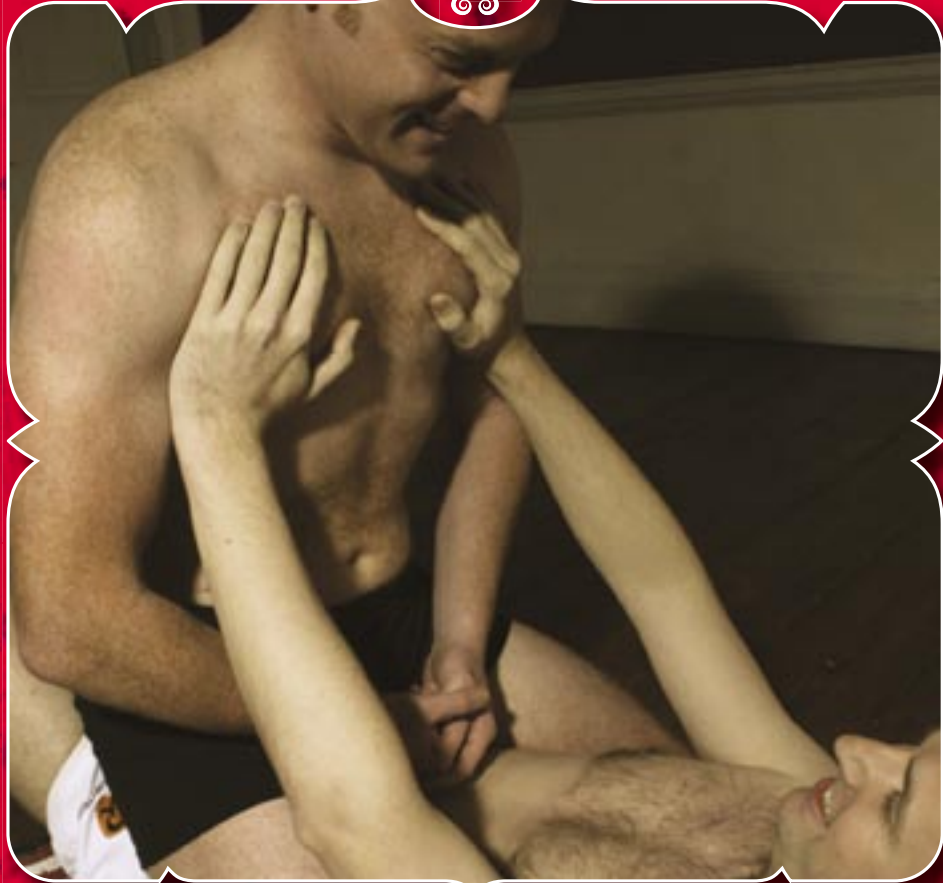


HIV Positive Men and Sex

Today many HIV+ people are living full and healthy lives. This includes being sexually active. There are particular issues for HIV+ men regarding other STIs and further HIV contact. HIV+ men having unprotected sex with other HIV+ people can lead to picking up other strains of HIV which may be harder to treat. This can cause problems in treatment options now and in the future.

SAFER SEX CAN PREVENT HIV

**HIV POSITIVE PEOPLE TODAY ARE
LIVING FULL AND HEALTHY LIVES**



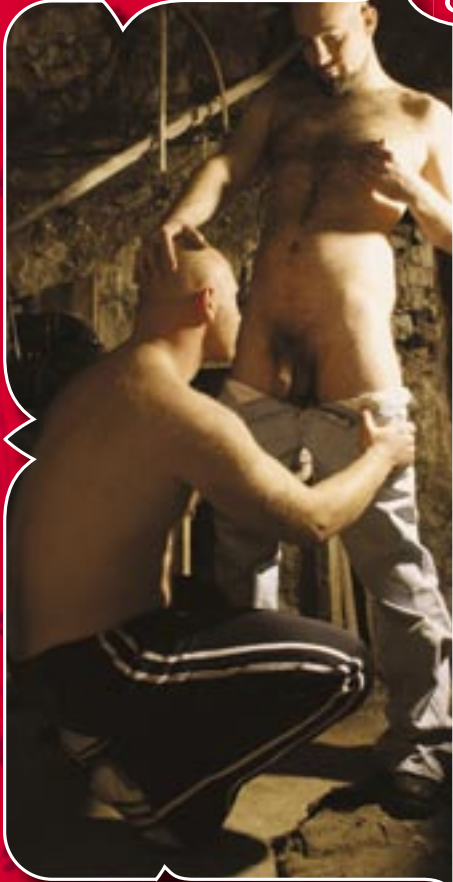
WHAT ARE THE RISKS FOR HIV THROUGH SEX?

HIV is relatively difficult to get or pass on through sex, but the risks depend on what you do. Here are some examples of what is lower and higher risk.

No Risk for HIV

Massage, wanking, cuddling, nipple pulling, spanking, fantasy, watching DVDs, or each other, wrestling, phone sex, sex on the web, porn, fucking between legs (cum away from his arse), reading, shooting cum on his belly, back, face, using toys, dildos, vibrators, fingers (not shared), sexy talking, slapping the face with cock, body rubbing, being sucked off, pissing, shopping, cruising, licking around the balls, along the shaft of the cock, between the arsehole and balls, using cream, jelly, custard, honey, ice cubes — our imaginations (fantasies) are limitless.

FANTASIES ARE LIMITLESS



Little to no risk for HIV

Anal or vaginal sex using a condom and lube, provided the condom is used properly, carries very little risk. (See condom use section)

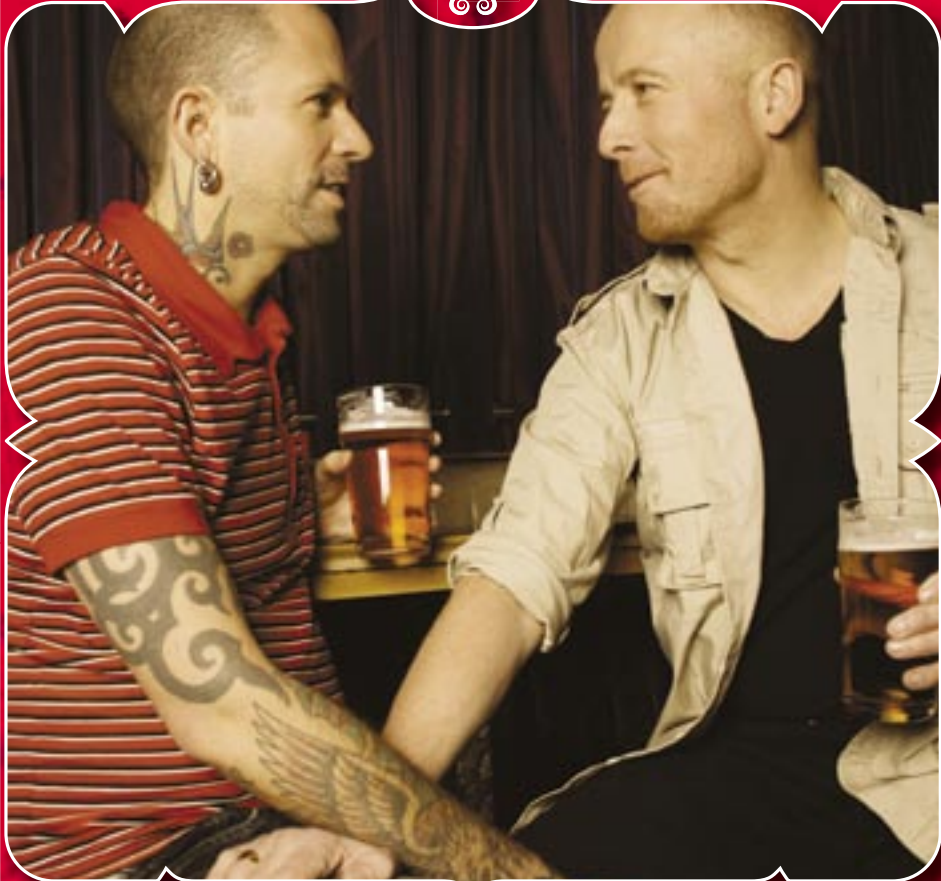
Low Risk for HIV

Sucking cock if you take cum (sperm) in the mouth.

High Risk for HIV

Unprotected (anal or vaginal) fucking, sharing injecting equipment (needles and syringes) sharing blades, needles or piercing equipment.

USE CONDOMS

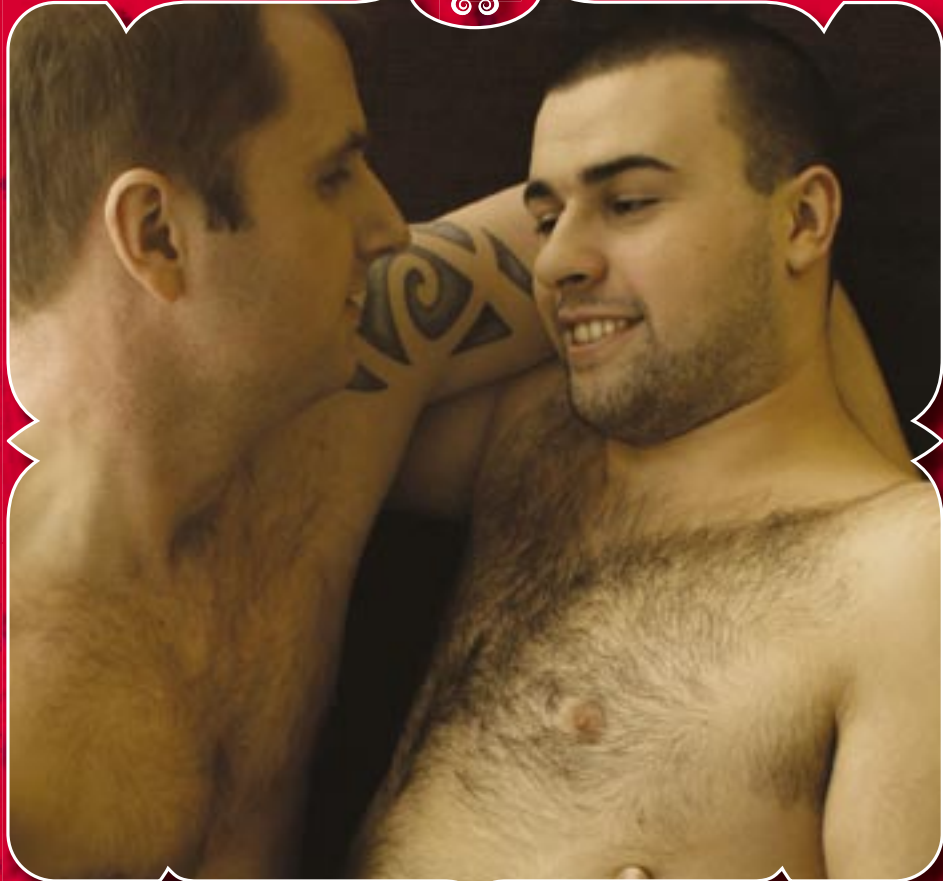


ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

We all know that alcohol and other drugs (including prescription drugs) can affect our pleasure and judgement. Sex, drugs and alcohol can make it more difficult to judge the risks you are taking. Try to be aware of your limits and your right to say no. Plan in advance — carry condoms and lube.

If you have any problems or worries about your alcohol or drug use, contact a health worker or a HIV/Drugs Helpline.





TALKING ABOUT IT

Talking about it can help you get the sex you want. Talking about sex and safer sex can help you but it isn't always easy. It can often seem difficult and embarrassing. It can raise a number of issues that can be uncomfortable for us to talk about. The more you talk about sex the easier it becomes to discuss the sex you really want. Here are some tips you may find useful.

Awareness

Think about what you want, think about what you like. Don't be afraid to say 'Yes' or 'No' depending on what feels right for you. Take the lead. Be prepared to negotiate and agree to practise safer sex.

Great sex doesn't depend on you or the other person being an expert lover. It depends on two people exploring and enjoying the sex they are having.

THE SEX YOU REALLY WANT



Remember that talking about sex can be fun and helpful, for example moaning and groaning can show pleasure, tensing (becoming rigid) and pulling away can show discomfort. Be guided by the other person's body language. Tell the guy what you like as well as being clear about what turns you off. For example "I'm into safer sex ", "I have condoms and lube", "I never fuck without a condom", " I feel horny/turned on" Or sometimes you need to say "I've changed my mind" It's OK to refuse someone and say 'No'. Sometimes we need to say 'No' (verbally and non-verbally) and we may need to repeat this. The clearest 'No' is to walk away or remove yourself from the situation. It's OK to change your mind. If it doesn't feel right, don't do it. Sex against your will is considered sexual assault or rape. If this happens you can do something about it. Talk to a health worker or contact a rape crisis centre.

Any embarrassment or awkwardness felt at the time is better than regretting what you did later. You have the right to change your mind, no matter how far you have or haven't gone. Be clear. If you definitely are not into something then don't give in, no matter who the guy is or how horny you are. Remember your limits.

I NEVER FUCK WITHOUT A CONDOM

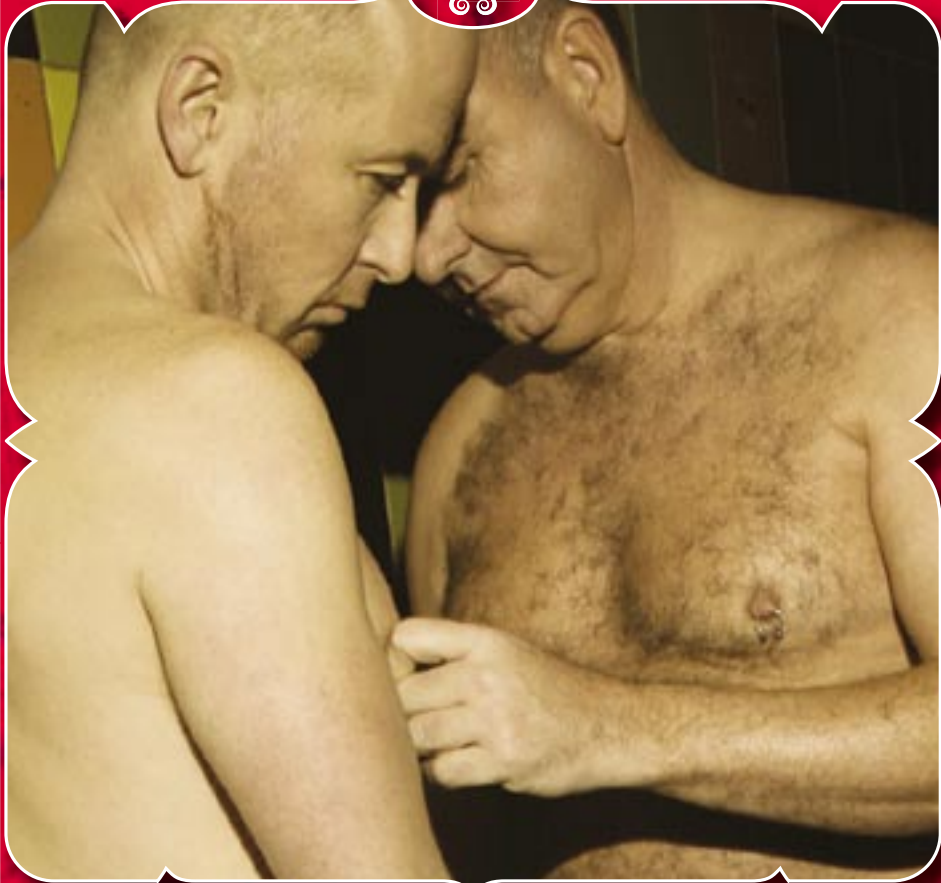


USING CONDOMS

Condoms are the best ways of stopping the spread of HIV when fucking. Always use good quality condoms, look for the CE symbol and make sure they are not past their sell-by date. Whether you are having anal or vaginal sex it is important to use condoms. You will also need to use plenty of water-based lubricant such as 'Wet Stuff', 'Liquid Silk', 'Pasante Lube', 'TLC' or 'KY'. Oil-based lubricants such as 'Vaseline' will damage latex condoms and should never be used.

Guidelines for condom use

1. Open the packet carefully to avoid damaging the condom.
2. Hold the condom by the closed end, squeezing out the air to make room for the cum.
3. Roll the condom over your cock when it is hard.
4. Use plenty of water-based lubricant on the condom when it is on your cock as well as plenty on his ass.
5. While you are fucking check to make sure the condom is still in place and hasn't slid off.
6. If you are fucking for more than 20 minutes the chances of the condom tearing starts to increase, so it's important to change the condom.
7. As you are pulling out, hold onto the base of the condom so that it doesn't slip off.



When wanking, use a condom. This will help you get used to putting condoms on. (Using one condom over another increases the risk of breakage).

Note: There are non-latex (polyurethane) condoms on the market for men, similar to the female condom. Used properly they can provide protection and oil-based lubricant can be used with these.

**ALWAYS USE GOOD
QUALITY CONDOMS**

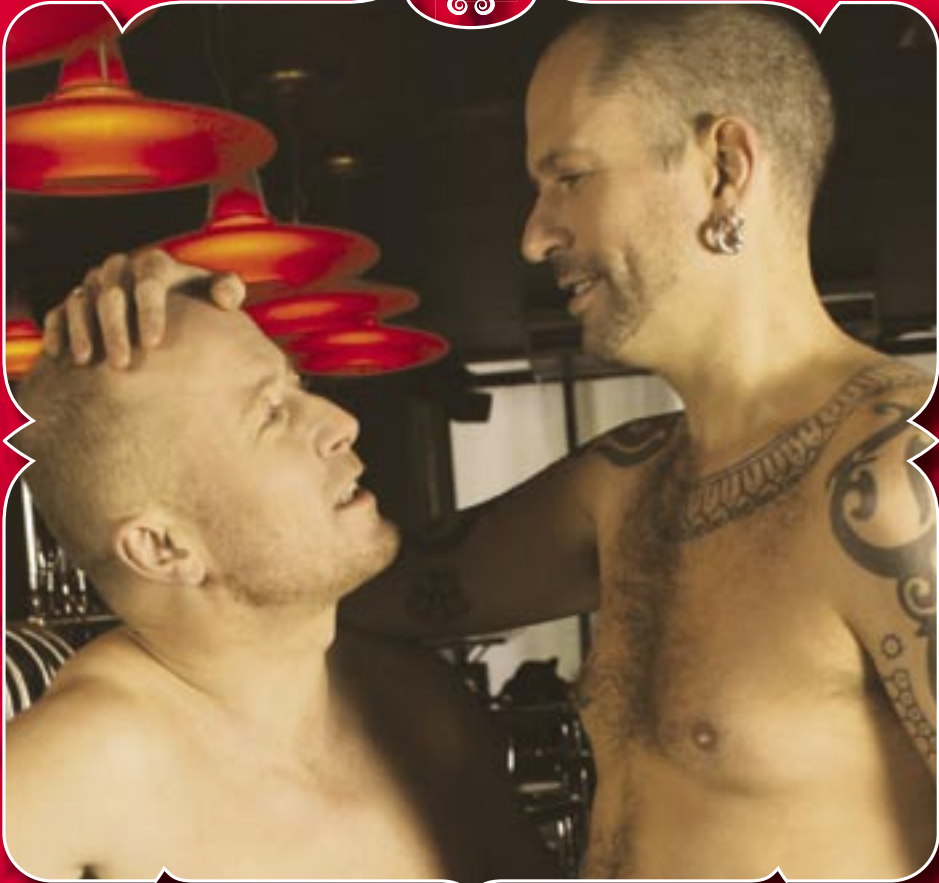


WHAT IF I HAVE HAD A RISK ?

You may have had unprotected anal sex at some time in your life and this can cause a lot of stress or worry. There are many reasons why this may have happened. To reduce the chance of this happening again, think about why you had anal sex without a condom.

- You were afraid to say you wanted to have only safer sex?
- You were afraid to ask him to use a condom?
- You assumed the other person was HIV- or HIV+ ?
- You wanted to see what it would be like or you didn't care about the risk?
- You were embarrassed about putting a condom on?
- You had never put on a condom before?
- You were under the influence of alcohol or other drugs?

OR A CONDOM MAY HAVE BURST OR SLIPPED OFF ?



WHAT SHOULD I DO?

If you had anal sex without a condom or a condom burst, try not to panic. Although this leaves you at risk from HIV, you should not automatically assume you have contracted HIV. Talk about it with an outreach worker, friend or health worker or telephone a gay or HIV helpline. Think about getting tested for HIV. Remember that HIV can take three months to show up in a blood test. This is known as the 'window period'. For more information on getting tested see the GHN booklet 'In The Know'.

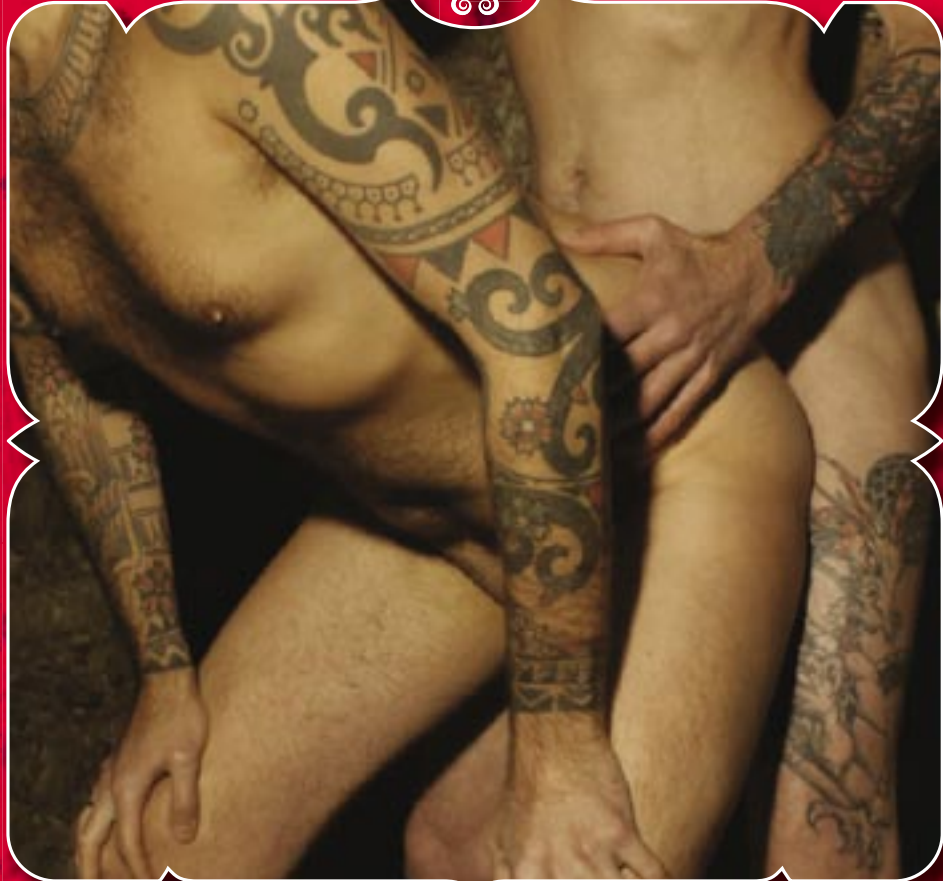
TRY NOT TO PANIC



PEP

There is also a new emergency treatment for HIV exposure called Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP). PEP is a four-week course of anti-HIV drugs that may stop HIV infection becoming established if it is started soon after exposure to HIV. If you think you may have come into contact with HIV, for example by having unprotected sex, or if a condom broke or after risky drug injecting, then it could be worth having PEP treatment. However, it is not guaranteed to work. You will also have to be assessed by a medical doctor. To be most effective, PEP should be started within a few hours of exposure and no more than 72 hours later. In Ireland, PEP is available at a number of STI/GUM clinics and A&E Departments. See the GHN leaflet "PEP and You!"

ACT QUICKLY



FUCKING WITHOUT CONDOMS

If you are in a relationship, you or your partner may want to stop using condoms. It is important to think about this before going ahead. With some people in relationships, using condoms and then stopping has led to guys catching HIV. Being "in love" or assuming that he "can't have HIV" or if you or he tested within the 'window period' are some of the reasons that people in relationships stop using condoms. If you are in a relationship and are thinking about no longer using condoms, it's important that you first talk about the type of relationship you want and get tested together. Think about the implications if one or both of you came back HIV+. Remember the three-month 'window period' and after the test results talk again before making the final decision to not use condoms.

**LOVE DOES NOT PREVENT HIV
CONDOMS CAN**

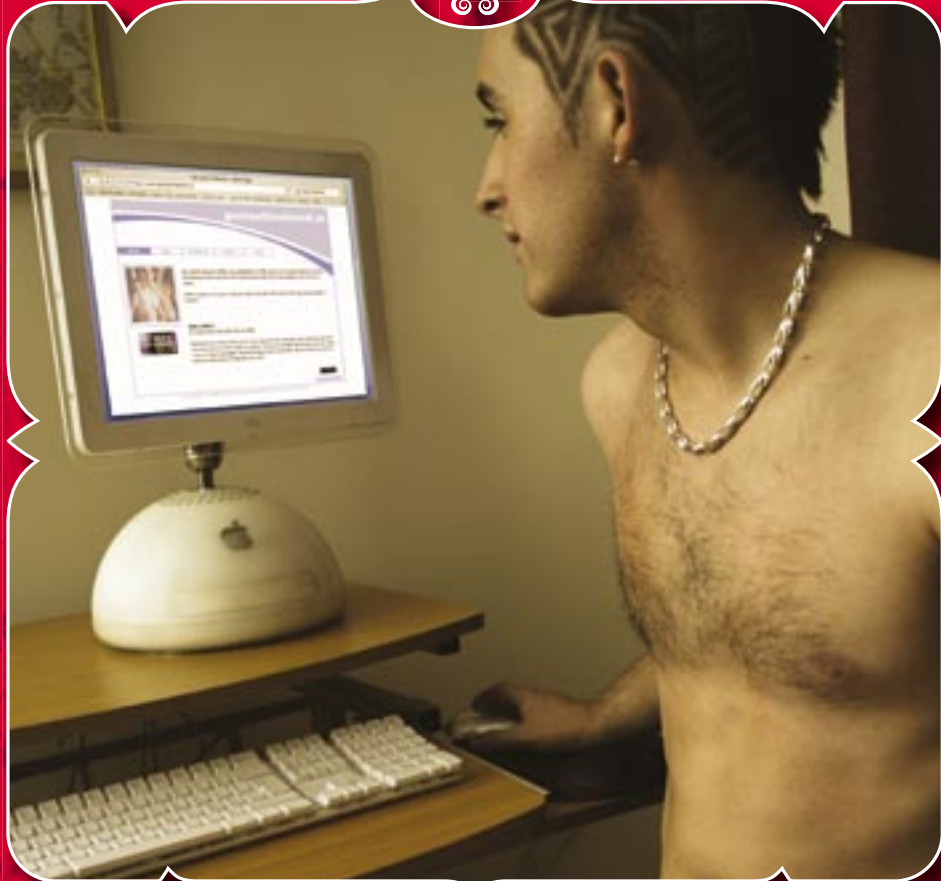


Most of the safer sex practices listed in this booklet refer to HIV transmission. It is important to remember that what is safer for HIV is not necessarily safe for other STIs, including Hepatitis A or B or C. Read the GHN Booklet "Love Bugs" for information on these.

We in GHN are delighted to promote safer sex. If you want to know more about any aspect of safer sex or your sexual health, contact any of the services listed or go on the web. After all, safer sex is limitless.

Play Safe Play Sexy (and other information) is also available on our website in Chinese, French, Irish, Polish, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish, at www.gayhealthnetwork.ie

**PLAY SAFE PLAY SEXY
USE CONDOMS**



GAY HEALTH SUPPORT

Gay Men's Health Project

Outreach and Counselling
Outhouse, 105 Capel Street,
Dublin 1
W: www.gaymenshealthproject.ie
T: 01 8734 952
E: gmhpoutreach@eircom.net

Johnny (Peer Group)

105 Capel Street, Dublin 1
Information, Safer Sex Packs
www.johnny.ie

Open Heart House

2 St Mary's Place, Dublin 7
W: www.openhearthouse.ie
T: 01 8305 000
E: info@openhearthouse.ie

Southern Gay Men's Health Project

8 South Main Street, Cork
W: www.gayhealthproject.com
T: 021 4278 470
E: info@gayhealthproject.com

The Rainbow Project

2-8 Commercial Court, Belfast
W: www.rainbow_project.org
T: 028 9031 9030 (048 from RoI)
E: manager@rainbow-project.org

The Rainbow Project

12A Queens Street
Derry/Londonderry
W: www.rainbow_project.org
T: 028 7128 3030 (048 from RoI)
E: manager@rainbow-project.org

Inclusion in the listing pages is not necessarily an endorsement of the content of this publication.

Free Condoms and Lube also available at most of the above centres.



GAY INFORMATION & SUPPORT

Helplines

Dublin:	01 8721 055	Limerick:	061 310 101
Galway:	091 566 134	Outwest:	094 9372 479
Cork:	021 4271 087	Belfast:	028 9032 2023 (048 from Rol)
Derry:	028 7128 3030 (048 from Rol)	Dundalk:	042 9353 035
Greenbow:	deafgeenbowlgbt@yahoo.ie		

HIV/AIDS Organisations

Dublin AIDS Alliance, Dublin.	01 8733 799
Sexual Health Centre, Cork.	021 4276 676
Red Ribbon, Limerick.	061 316 661
AIDS West, Galway.	091 562 213
AIDS Help Northwest, Co Donegal.	074 9125 500
HIV Support Centre, Belfast.	028 9024 9268 (048 from Rol)

HIV and Drugs Free Telephone Information

Northern Ireland: HIV Helpline	0800 137 437
Republic of Ireland: HIV/Drugs Helpline	1800 459 459



STI /GUM CLINICS

Gay Men's Health Project, Dublin 4	01 6699 553
St. James's Hospital, Dublin 8	01 4162 315
Mater Hospital, Dublin 7	01 8032 063*
Regional Hospital, Waterford City	051 842 646 *
General Hospital, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary. C/O	051 842 646 *
Victoria Hospital, Cork City	021 4966 844 *
Regional Hospital, Tralee, Co Kerry. C/O	021 4966 844*
Regional Hospital, Limerick City	061 482 382 *
General Hospital, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary C/O	061 482 382 *
General Hospital, Ennis, Co. Clare. C/O	061 482 382 *
General Hospital, Castlebar, Co Mayo	094 9021 733*
University Hospital , Galway City	091 525 200*
Portiuncula Hospital , Ballinasloe, Co Galway	090 9648 372*
Regional Hospital, Sligo Town	071 9170 473*
Altnagelvin Hospital, Derry City	028 71 611 269* (048 from Rol)
Coleraine Hospital, Co. Derry	028 703 460 248* (048 from Rol)
Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast City	028 90 634 050* (048 from Rol)
Daisy Hill Hospital, Newry, Co Down	028 3083 5000* (048 from Rol)

* call for appointments

See. www.hivireland.ie for complete details of above services.



THANK YOU

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GHN can be contacted through Outhouse, 105 Capel Street, Dublin 1
Tel: +3531 8734 952 www.gayhealthnetwork.ie

Gay Health Network

GHN is an All Ireland Network of voluntary and statutory agencies and groups involved in sexual health, HIV and AIDS work aimed at gay, bisexual men and men who have sex with men. Since 1994 we have produced many publications and other resources through generous funding from various bodies including Alternative Miss Ireland (AMI) for which we are very grateful.



PLAY SAFE

PLAY SEXY



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Gay Health Network

Outhouse, 105 Capel Street, Dublin 1, Ireland
Tel: +35318734952 www.gayhealthnetwork.ie