

## What is HIV?

**HIV** or the Human Immunodeficiency Virus does not allow your body to fight off diseases. HIV causes **AIDS** or Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. **HIV/AIDS** is a very serious disease. There is no cure for HIV or AIDS but if diagnosed early there are medicines that can help you stay healthy.

## Are you at risk for HIV/AIDS?

Yes, everyone is at risk for HIV/AIDS;

### Babies & Children

### Teenagers

### Men & Women

### Rich & Poor

### Straight, Gay or

### Bisexual people

You can not tell if someone is HIV positive by looking at them. If someone has HIV/AIDS and they don't know they do, he or she can pass the virus to others.



## How can I get HIV/AIDS?

### You can get HIV/AIDS if you:

- Have unprotected sex (anal, oral or vaginal) with someone who has HIV/AIDS.
- Use IV Drugs and share needles
- Share toothbrushes or razors.

### You can not get HIV/AIDS by:

- Touching or hugging
- Sharing food with someone who has HIV/AIDS
- Insect bites
- Coughing or sneezing
- Dry kissing (kissing on the cheeks)

## How can I protect myself from HIV/AIDS?

### You can protect yourself by:

- Not having sex (anal, oral or vaginal).
- If you have sex, use a new latex condom or dental dam each time you have sex.

- Not sharing needles, toothbrushes or razor blades.
- Knowing the HIV status of your partner.
- Regularly going for screening tests.
- Getting more information on HIV/AIDS.

## Women and HIV

- Pregnant women who have HIV can pass it to their babies.
- If you decide to get pregnant be sure to get tested for HIV first.
- If you know you have HIV and are pregnant, talk to your doctor about how you can protect your baby.

## Where can I be tested for HIV/AIDS?

All HIV testing and counseling is confidential. If you want to be tested, you can ask your **PCP** (doctor), call the **MetroPlus Partnership in Care Program** or go to any **New York City or New York State anonymous testing program**.

## If you are HIV Positive:

- Use a condom or dental dam every time you have sex. A latex condom will help protect you and your partner and will lower your risks for other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).
- Talk with your doctor about HIV and your risk for other diseases, especially Tuberculosis.
- Take care of yourself. Be sure to eat a balanced diet and get plenty of rest.
- Ask your doctor about medicines that can help you stay healthy.
- See your PCP (doctor) regularly.



## Remember:

- Use a condom every time you have sex.
- You can have HIV and still feel healthy.
- Know the HIV status of your partner.
- Being tested is the only way to know for sure if you have HIV/AIDS.

### For more information on HIV/AIDS call:

N.Y.S. HIV/AIDS Information Hotline

**1-800-541-2437**

National AIDS Hotline

**1-800-342-2437 (English)**

**1-800-344-7432 (Spanish)**

MetroPlus Health Plan's HIV/AIDS

Partnership in Care Program

**1-800-579-9798**

The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your doctor. There may be variations in treatment that your doctor may recommend based on individual facts about you.

**MetroPlus Health Plan**  
160 Water Street, New York, NY 10038

**Member information:**  
1-800-303-9626

**For information about MetroPlus Health Plan:**  
1-800-475-METRO

# HIV/AIDS What You Should Know

