

Hepatitis C (Hep C)



> WHAT IS IT?

Hepatitis C or Hep C is a treatable blood borne virus that infects the liver.

> HOW IS IT TRANSMITTED?

It spreads when blood from a person with the virus enters another person's blood stream.

> WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Tired or low energy, feeling sick or lack of appetite, stomach pain, yellowing of eyes and skin, brain fog and stomach pain. Many people don't know they have Hep C as the symptoms can be mild, or appear years later.

> TREATMENT OPTIONS

Hep C is treatable with a medication taken daily for 8 – 12 weeks. 97% of people who receive treatment make a full recovery.



GETTING TESTED

Getting tested is very important as many people don't know they have Hep C as symptoms can be mild or appear years later.

Testing is done by a simple finger prick test that is offered for free at your local drug service, GP, sexual health clinic or via a free home testing kit, which can be ordered online.

HOW TO REDUCE THE RISKS

- ✔ Avoid sharing needles, pipes or snorting tools.
- ✔ Get sterile equipment and safety advice from your local drug service.
- ✔ If you reuse equipment, clean it with thin bleach or chlorine tablets.
- ✔ If using with others, mark your equipment or use different colours so you know what is yours.
- ✔ Use low dead space needles and syringes if you can.
- ✔ If smoking, use your own mouthpiece.
- ✔ Put used items in sharps bins and return them to a pharmacy or drug service.
- ✔ Practice safer sex: use condoms or gloves and get regular check-ups.
- ✔ Get tested if you think you may have been exposed.

If you would like **information,**
advice or support with

getting tested, visit
www.turning-point.co.uk



HIV



> WHAT IS IT?

Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a virus that affects the immune system. If untreated, it can damage the body's ability to fight infections over time.

> HOW IS IT TRANSMITTED?

HIV can be passed on through blood-to-blood contact such as sharing injecting equipment or sexual contact.

> WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Some people have no symptoms. Others may feel flu-like symptoms such as fever, sore throat, headaches or extreme tiredness, swollen glands, muscle or joint aches, skin rash or night sweats.

> TREATMENT OPTIONS

There is no cure, but HIV can be treated. HIV is treated with medicine (called antiretroviral therapy or ART), and people who are diagnosed early, access ART and stay on it can keep the virus suppressed and live long and healthy lives. People on effective HIV medication cannot pass on the virus to their partners.



GETTING TESTED

Testing is the best way to know if you have HIV.

Testing is done by a simple finger prick test that is offered for free at your local drug service, GP, sexual health clinic or via a free home testing kit, which can be ordered online.

HOW TO REDUCE THE RISKS

- ✔ Know your HIV status – getting tested is quick, confidential and free.
- ✔ Use condoms where you can
- ✔ Use lube during sex to reduce bleeding and tearing
Consider taking Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) or Post-Exposure Prophylaxis to if you are at risk of being exposed to HIV
- ✔ Avoid sharing snorting, smoking and injecting equipment and collect sterile kit from your local drug service or pharmacy

HIV and AIDS are not the same thing

AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is a collection of illnesses caused when HIV weakens the immune system. If left untreated HIV can lead to AIDS, with more serious consequences.

If you are HIV positive ask about treatment options to help you stay healthy and undetectable

If you would like **information, advice or support** with **getting tested**, visit **www.turning-point.co.uk**



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