

# HIV Trans- mission

**HIV Facts and Myths.**

**BZgA**  
Bundeszentrale  
für  
gesundheitliche  
Aufklärung



**LIEBES  
LEBEN**

**Es ist deins.  
Schütze es.**

# The risks in a nutshell

You can **contract HIV**, once blood, semen or vaginal fluid gets into the blood system. This happens when you share needles, **but mainly if you have unprotected sex.**

A mother, who is HIV positive, can infect the **foetus in her womb**, her baby during birth or while breastfeeding. In Germany, the risk of contracting HIV through **blood products** and blood transfusions is reduced to a bare minimum.

When taking trips to other countries, the different quality in medical care should be considered. If in doubt ask whether disinfected instruments and solely tested blood products are used!

HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are more widely spread in many countries outside Europe. In addition, **condoms** are not always available in the quality, to which we are used. Therefore, take plenty with you.

Only fat-free lubricants can be used with condoms. Oils, fats, lotions, creams, and Vaseline damage the condom. And: Condoms are sensitive to heat.

**The HIV risks vary** depending on different situations in life. This small brochure should give you a quick summary. Therefore, the following pages highlight situations, risks, and advice in various colours:

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**High risk**

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**Low risk**

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**No risk**

## **Important!**

**There is no vaccine against HIV. However, there is a simple and effective way to protect yourself from contracting HIV: Condoms! It is important to know, when you need to protect yourself and when there is no risk of contracting HIV.**

# Condoms and Lubricants

**Condoms protect against HIV. When selecting condoms, pay attention to quality. You recognize tested condoms by the CE sign on the package. Pay also attention to the expiry date on the condom pack and the correct condom size.**

**If you use lubricants, you should know the following: The lubricant must be fat-free! Oils, fats, lotions, creams, or Vaseline damage the condom and can lead it to tear. Therefore, use only water soluble or fat-free lubricants, which are specifically suited for condoms.**



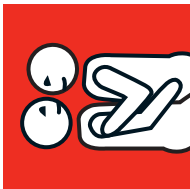
## Anal sex without a condom

**The risk is immensely high.** During anal intercourse (the penis is inserted into the anus), both partners are at risk if no condom is used. The risk is particularly high for the passive partner. It does not matter whether it is a man or a woman. There is also a risk without ejaculation.

**Our advice:** Use condoms during anal intercourse and a sufficient quantity of fat-free lubricant.

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**High risk**



## Vaginal sex without a condom

**The risk is immensely high.** During vaginal intercourse (the penis is in the vagina), the risk of contracting HIV is high if no condom is used.

**Our advice:** Use condoms for vaginal sex.

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**High risk**



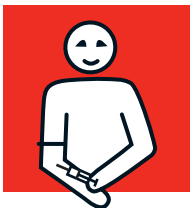
## Pregnancy if a woman is HIV positive

**The child is exposed to a high risk.** The expecting mother, who is HIV positive, can infect the child before, during and after birth (while breastfeeding). However, this risk for the child can be greatly reduced through comprehensive medical care and treatment with HIV drugs. We recommend every woman and her partner get tested for HIV, if they want to conceive and an HIV infection cannot be excluded.

**Our advice:** Get a medical consult as early as possible!

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**High risk**



## Sharing of syringes and needles

**The risk is immensely high.** If several persons use the same needle and syringe, the risk is very high.

**Our advice:** Always use your own sterile needles and syringes. Never share needles and syringes with others.

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**High risk**

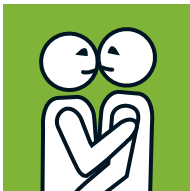




## Oral sex (sexual stimulation by mouth of a man's or a woman's genitals)

**Low risk.** The risk to contract aids during orals sex is low, provided no sperms or blood gets into the mouth.

**Our advice:** Avoid getting sperms or blood into the mouth.



## Kisses, French kisses

**No risk during kisses.** As for French kisses, a risk can theoretically not be excluded; however, it has not ever been proven to be the path of transmission in any cases worldwide.

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**No risk**



## Physical contact, skin contact

Skin and physical contacts such as shaking hands, petting, cuddling pose **no risk**.

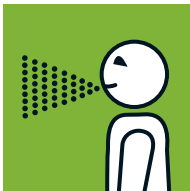
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**No risk**



## Family life, community life

**No risk.** No one can contract HIV, even if he or she lives closely together in one family or community with a person with HIV.



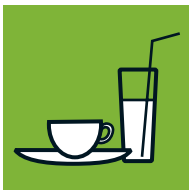
## Transmission through air

**No risk.** Moreover, you cannot contract HIV by being coughed or sneezed on.



## Food and restaurant

**No risk.**



## Dishes, clothing, linens

**No risk.** Sharing dishes does not bear any risks. In addition, you do not have to wash the clothes or linens of a person with HIV separately.



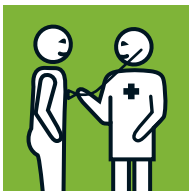
## Swimming pool, sauna, bathrooms, washrooms

**No risk.** If you use common or community facilities,  
you cannot contract HIV.

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**No risk**





## Physician, dentist, hospital

Medical treatment in compliance with the standard **hygiene regulations** (i.e. the use of disposable materials or sterilized instruments) poses no risk.

**If blood or blood plasma is administered**, there is a very low residual risk despite the highly effective safety procedures. For this reason, it is recommended to donate your own blood before any scheduled surgery. **Inactivated blood products** are practically HIV safe if manufactured properly.

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**No risk**



## Having your hair done, getting a tattoo, manicure, piercing, or ear-piercing

**No risk**, provided the existing **hygiene rules** are followed. Use any piercing or cutting items that can come in contact with blood only once or disinfect them effectively.

**Our advice:** Have piercings, tattoos or ear piercings only done by qualified persons.



## Insect bytes

**No risk.**

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**No risk**

# Where can I go for more information?

If you have any questions, you may contact the personal consulting hotline of BZgA. You can remain anonymous and it is available online or by phone.

**0221 892031, [www.aidsberatung.de](http://www.aidsberatung.de)**

If you have any additional questions such as about the HIV test, you can also get extensive and personal advice at the **Health Department** (Gesundheitsamt), **the AIDS-Hilfe** or **at any other AIDS information office**. If you so desire, you can get advice without stating

**You can get free informational material at:**

**The Federal Centre for Health Education,**

50819 Köln

By fax: 0221 8992257

By e-mail: [order@bzga.de](mailto:order@bzga.de)

[www.bzga.de](http://www.bzga.de)

[www.liebesleben.de](http://www.liebesleben.de)

and at the

**Deutsche AIDS-Hilfe e.V. (DAH)**

Wilhelmstraße 138, 10963 Berlin

by e-mail: [dah@aidshilfe.de](mailto:dah@aidshilfe.de)

[www.aidshilfe.de](http://www.aidshilfe.de)

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You find this information on HIV transmission as master copy in black and white in 29 languages on the Internet at

**[www.gib-aids-keine-chance.de](http://www.gib-aids-keine-chance.de)**

A summary of the media of BZgA on HIV/STI prevention has the

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