

# What MSM Can Do

Your risk of getting HIV or passing it to someone else depends on several things. Do you know what they are? You might want to talk to someone who knows about HIV. You can also do the following:

- Abstain from sex (do not have oral, anal, or vaginal sex) until you are in a relationship with only one person, are having sex with only each other, and each of you knows the other's HIV status.
  - If both you and your partner have HIV, use condoms to prevent other STDs and possible infection with a different strain of HIV.
  - If only one of you has HIV, use a latex condom and lubricant every time you have sex.
- If you have, or plan to have, more than one sex partner, consider the following:
  - Get tested for HIV. Men who have sex with other men should get tested at least once a year.
  - Talk about HIV and other STDs with each partner before you have sex.
  - Learn as much as you can about each partner's past behavior (sex and drug use) and consider the risks to your health before you have sex.
  - Ask your partners if they have recently been tested for HIV; encourage those who have not been tested to do so.
  - Use a latex condom and lubricant every time you have sex.
  - If you think you may have been exposed to another STD such as gonorrhea, syphilis, or *Chlamydia trachomatis* infection, get treatment. These diseases can increase your risk of getting HIV.
  - Get vaccinated against hepatitis A and B viruses.
- Even if you think you have low risk for HIV infection, get tested whenever you have a regular medical check-up.
- Do not inject illicit drugs (drugs not prescribed by your doctor). You can get HIV through needles, syringes, and other works if they are contaminated with the blood of someone who has HIV. Drugs also cloud your mind, which may result in riskier sex.
- If you do inject drugs, do the following:
  - Use only clean needles, syringes, and other works.
  - Never share needles, syringes, or other works.
  - Be careful not to expose yourself to another person's blood.
  - Get tested for HIV test at least once a year.
  - Consider getting counseling and treatment for your drug use.
  - Get vaccinated against hepatitis A and B viruses.
- Do not have sex when you are taking drugs or drinking alcohol because being high can make you more likely to take risks.



To protect yourself, remember these ABCs:

**A=Abstinence**

**B=Be Faithful**

**C=Condoms**