

Reduce the odds / GMFA.

Contributors

Gay Men Fighting AIDS (Organization)

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Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>



Reduce the odds

Because of HIV, the risk from other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) has seemed minor - the consequences are less severe and most can be treated. However, because STIs seem less important, we tend not to make time to get checked for infections on a regular basis. But there are significant links between STIs and HIV.

A negative man with an STI is 2 to 5 times more susceptible to acquiring HIV, because the body's responses to the STI makes it easier for HIV to enter your body. A positive man who has an STI can be more infectious, because the amount of the HIV in his body rises due to his immune system dealing with another infection. With gonorrhoea, HIV levels in a man's cum rises by eight times. After treatment for the STI, HIV levels return to normal.

Most gay men fuck with condoms to protect themselves against HIV, but a significant amount of us slip-up when we least expect it. We never think we will, but we sometimes do. If this happens, you can reduce your chances of infecting or getting infected with HIV by having regular check-ups for STIs every three to six months.

These check-ups are important because you won't always know if you have an infection. Infections in your cock will usually result in a yellow discharge or a stinging pain. If the infection is in your throat or arse, it is possible that there will be no obvious symptoms.

Condoms will protect you from HIV, but they won't stop you from acquiring other STIs - as infections can also be passed on through sucking, rimming and fingering.

Details of sexual health clinics are in the Yellow Pages under 'clinics'. Treatment is free and confidential, and some clinics have special services for gay men.

For more information about safer sex visit our website at www.demon.co.uk/gmfa

Unit 42 The Eurolink Centre 49 Effra Road London SW2 1BZ
Telephone 0171-738 6872 facsimile 0171-738 7140
e-mail gmfa@gmfa.demon.co.uk

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