

HIV : the facts for women who sell sex : no-nonsense information about HIV for women who work as prostitutes / Immunity Publications Ltd.

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HIV

THE FACTS for women who sell sex

No-nonsense information
about HIV for women
who work as prostitutes

immunity

SURVIVAL GUIDE

AVOID THE RISKS

Make sure your blood or vaginal fluids don't come into contact with a client's blood or cum.

- **Fucking – front or back – is risky. But condoms can make it safer.**
- **Using a strong condom and lots of water-based jelly lubricant – like KY – will make fucking safer.**
- **Using a lubricant's especially important if you're having anal sex.**
- **Don't use petroleum jelly lubricants – like Vaseline. They rot condoms and make them split inside you.**
- **Sucking can be risky, even if the client doesn't cum in your mouth.**
- **Ordinary condoms taste awful, so get flavoured condoms from your chemist or by mail order.**
- **Enemas and douches can scratch you and cut you inside, so don't use them before or after sex.**
- **Tell clients about alternatives to fucking and sucking. A lot of clients enjoy putting their penis**

between a woman's breasts or legs.

- Wanking's safe – so are talking dirty and exploring fantasies.
- Get clients to cum on you – not in you.

You'll be safest if you get them to stick to:

- penis to body contact – but not between your buttocks or thighs.
- dry kissing.
- wanking – 'hand relief'.
- sex toys – but don't share them

CONDOM CHECKLIST

Use a condom you've chosen. Pick a brand with the British Standards 'kitemark' and labelled as strong.

- Get flavoured condoms for when you have to suck a client off.
- Make sure the condoms you use haven't passed the expiry date on the pack or on the envelope round each of them.
- Check the condom's envelope. If it's torn, throw away the condom. Exposure to air can rot them.
- Make sure the client's got the condom on properly. A lot of

men don't know how to use them.

- To be sure, put the condom on him yourself – you can turn it into a bit of a game.
- No condom is guaranteed not to burst, so using a spermicidal foam as well could make you safer, if you're fucking.

If you have an accident with a condom – or if you're raped – and you're worried about pregnancy, go to a Family Planning Clinic, or your GP.

A 'morning after' pill will sort out any pregnancy anxieties – even if it can't do anything about HIV.

If you're worried about HIV infection, an NHS genitourinary medicine – or sexually transmitted disease – clinic will give you a check-up and advise you about taking the HIV test.

STAY HEALTHY

Being well will help to protect you from any infections you come into contact with – and, if you're HIV positive, that will be extra important to you.

If you smoke, drink or use drugs, cut down on all of them. Eat a well-balanced diet, exercise regularly and get enough sleep. In other words, look after yourself!

If you work safely, you've got to be

just as safe in your private sex life to be really safe.

Your private partner may be risking HIV infection.

If you have the slightest suspicion that he – or she – has been taking risks, think how you can make your sex life together safer.

PREGNANCY

Not all babies born to women who are HIV positive will be infected with the virus. Antibodies to the virus can appear in some babies, but often they disappear within a few years.

But a baby whose mother is HIV positive may become infected in the mother's womb.

If you've been at risk of getting infected with HIV, you may want an HIV test before getting pregnant. Make sure you get counselling before you agree to an HIV test. It will help you make up your mind.

THE HIV TEST

When you catch 'flu or a cold, your body produces antibodies to those infections.

It's part of your body's defence system and it's the first stage of your getting better.

If you get infected with HIV, your body produces antibodies to it, but

your defences can't kill this virus, because it's moved into some of your blood cells.

The usual test for HIV is a blood test which looks for the antibodies to HIV.

If you've got them, you're HIV positive. It's the test some people call the "AIDS test".

But no-one knows how many people who are HIV positive will develop AIDS. In fact there's no test which will show whether you will ever develop AIDS if you're HIV positive.

If you want to have an HIV test, make sure you get good counselling before the test is done – and before you get the result.

The test will be free if you have it done at an NHS genitourinary clinic, sometimes called 'GU', 'STD' or 'special' clinics.

A positive HIV test result could have a serious impact on your life. So, before you have the test done, think very carefully about what you're doing. That's why getting counselling before the test is so important.

There's no cure yet for being infected with HIV, but there are treatments which can slow down the virus's spread inside you.

You can help by changing the way you live. Unless you decide you might as well improve your lifestyle now anyway.

LONDON AND NATIONAL GROUPS AND SERVICES

Afro Caribbean Helpline: Black advisers offer specialist advice and support. *Fr, 6pm-10pm* on National AIDS Helpline: 0800-567 123 (calls free)

AIDS & Housing Project: Write: 16-18 Strutton Ground, London SW1P 2HP

Asian AIDS Helpline: Advice in Bengali, Gujarati, Punjabi, Hindi and English. *We, 6pm-10pm*. On 0800 282 445

BHAN (Black HIV and AIDS Network): Advice and support for all African, African Caribbean and Asian people affected by HIV and AIDS. Write: 106 King Street London W6 0QU

Body Positive: Self-help and support. For BP groups around the UK, call National AIDS Helpline (0800-567 123) or write: BP London, 51b Philbeach Gardens, London SW5 9EB. Visit BP London centre at 51b Philbeach Gardens, London SW5 for meals, free massage, advice sessions, including legal advice from Immunity. *Mo & Fr, 11am-9pm; Tu-Th, 11am-5pm*.

Body Positive Helpline: 071-373 9124. *Daily 7pm-10pm*

Body Positive Support Group: For newly diagnosed and anxious HIV positive people, lovers, close friends, relatives. *Su, 12.15pm*, London Lesbian and Gay Centre, 69 Cowcross Street, London EC1

Cantonese AIDS Helpline: Advice in Cantonese. *Tu 6pm-10pm*. 0800 - 282 445

CARA (Care And Resources for people affected by AIDS/HIV): Support for Christians and non-Christians. Write: 178 Lancaster Road, London W11 1QU. Phone: 071-792 8299

Immunity: Offers free, full-time specialist legal centre for anyone with legal problems connected with HIV, AIDS or a condition connected with them. Appointment necessary. Write: 260A Kilburn Lane, London W10 4BA. Phone: 081-968 8909. *Mo-Fr: 10am-5pm*

The Landmark: Day centre for people who are HIV positive and people who have AIDS. Meals, recreation facilities, advice sessions, including legal advice from Immunity. Info for other people. Write: 47a Tulse Hill, London SW2. Phone 081-671 7611/2. *Mo & Th, 10am-9pm; Tu & Fr, 10am-5pm; We, 10am-7pm*

Lesbian Employment Rights: Rights at work expert. Write: as LAGER. Phone: 081-983 0694 *Mo-Th 7pm-10pm*

London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard: Helpful. Phone: 071-734 7324 (24 hrs)

London Lesbian Line: Information, support, advice for women. Phone: 071-251 6911. *Tu & Th, 7pm-10pm*

London Lighthouse: Residential

care and drop-in centre. Counselling, health advice, home support, carers breaks, terminal care, advice sessions, including legal advice from Immunity. Write: 111 Lancaster Road, London W11 1QT. Phone: 071-792 1200

Margaret Pyke Centre: Gynaecology centre. Also does research. Free clinic. Gives free contraceptives. Ring for appointment before visiting. Write: 15 Batemans Buildings, Soho Square, London W1. Phone: 071-734 9351

Mildmay Mission Hospital: Convalescence, respite and terminal care, day care. 24 hour call-out home care service covers City and East London. Mother and baby rooms. Frontline drop-in office. Write: Hackney Road, London E2 7NA. Phone: 071-739 2331

National AIDS Helplines: Phone (free of charge): 0800-567 123 (for information and advice) or 0800-555 777 (for leaflets) 24 hrs, both lines

Positively Women: Advice, support for and from women affected by HIV and AIDS. Write: 5 Sebastian Street, London EC1V 0HE. Phone: 071-490 5515

Praed Street Project: Free health care for women who have sex for money. Resident doctor. At Mint Wing Cottage, St Mary's Hospital, London W2 1NY. Phone: 071-725 1549

PACE (Project for Advice, Care and Education): Counselling and counselling training. Meets at and write: London Lesbian and Gay Centre, 69 Cowcross Street, London EC1. Phone: 071-251 2689

SHARE (Shakti HIV/AIDS Response): Support, information, advice in Hindi, Urdu, Singhalese, Gujarati, Bengali, Tamil for people of south Asian origin. Write: Share, BM Box 3167, London WC1X 3JN

South East Asian HIV/AIDS Support Group: Meets third Wednesday of each month at London Lighthouse. Phone: Hong Tan on 071-485 6756

SCODA (Standing Conference on Drug Abuse): Information Officer has up to date list of syringe exchanges. Write: 1 Hatton Place, London EC1N 8RU. Phone: 071-430 2341/3

Terrence Higgins Trust: HIV and AIDS information, counselling. Support groups, volunteers help people who are HIV positive and people who have AIDS. Write: 52 Grays Inn Road, London WC1N 8JU. Phone: 071-831 0330 (admin); 071-242 1010 (helpline, *daily 3pm-10pm*)

Women's Health and Reproductive Rights Information Centre: Advice on all health issues for women. Write: 52 Featherstone Street, London WC1Y 8RT. *Mo, We, Fr, 11am-5pm*

WHAT'S HIV?

It's the Human Immunodeficiency Virus. You can get infected with it by letting someone else's blood, semen or vaginal fluids get into your bloodstream. HIV can't be transmitted by sharing cups, glasses or towels or in ordinary everyday contact. If you get infected, the virus may help AIDS develop in you. You run the risk of getting infected when:

- you have sex with someone who's infected with HIV. Cut the risk by insisting a man you have sex with wears a condom. Remember the more sex partners you have, the greater the risk you run.
- you share injecting equipment.
- you share sex toys without washing them before you swap.

WHAT'S AIDS?

It's the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. You can't catch it – it develops in you. If you have AIDS, your body's defence system can't fight disease. You can get serious diseases – some of them could kill you.

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