

Your public health nurse or health care professional can help and support you to gain control over this virus.

For More Information

• More information about safer sex and risk reduction can be obtained by calling the Sexual Health Centre (905) 688-3817 or the following contacts:

• **AIDS Niagara** at (905) 984-8684

• **AIDS & Sexual Health Information Line** at 1-800-668-2437

Other Resources

• **Kid's Helpline** at 1-800-668-6868

• **Drug and Alcohol Info Line** at 1-800-463-6273

• **StreetWorks, needle exchange program** at 905-984-8684

THE SEXUAL HEALTH CENTRES ARE LOCATED AT:

Fort Erie Sexual Health Centre

43 Hagey Avenue
Fort Erie, ON L2A 1W4
Phone: 905-871-5320
Fax: 905-871-3333

Hours of Service

Tuesday - Friday
9am - 12pm

Niagara Falls Sexual Health Centre

5710 Kitchener Street
Niagara Falls, ON L2G 1C1
Phone: 905-358-3636
Fax: 905-358-2717

Hours of Service

Monday - Friday
1pm - 4:30pm

St. Catharines Sexual Health Centre

277 Welland Avenue
St. Catharines, ON L2R 2P7
Phone: 905-688-3817
Toll Free: 1-800-263-5757
Fax: 905-688-6063

Hours of Service

Monday - Friday
8:30am - 12pm
1pm - 4:30pm

Welland Sexual Health Centre

540 King Street
Welland, ON L3B 3L1
Phone: 905-734-1014
Fax: 905-734-1770

Hours of Service

Monday - Friday
1pm - 4:30pm

** Clinic/Doctor services available by appointment only*

Mediklik - STI Clinic

St. Catharines General Hospital
142 Queenston Street, St. Catharines, ON
Tuesday & Thursdays - 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Walk-in Clinic - no appointment required

www.regional.niagara.on.ca



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE HIV POSITIVE?

What is HIV?

HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. HIV attacks the body's immune system. Over time, the immune system is weakened and an HIV-infected person can become sick with different illnesses. The following information and recommendations involve some changes in lifestyle and behaviour. Changes will reduce the risk of developing AIDS or spreading the infection.



Niagara Region
PUBLIC HEALTH

You are HIV positive. What does this mean?

Your recent blood test results indicate that you have developed antibodies to HIV. This means that you have been infected with HIV. This does not mean that you have AIDS, nor does it predict if and when you will develop AIDS. New treatments are available which allow HIV positive individuals to remain healthy for a long time. It is important to have regular appointments with your doctor in order to manage this infection properly. You should also tell your dentist.

All HIV positive persons are considered infectious. The virus, is present only in blood and sexual body fluids and cannot be transmitted by casual contact. You must inform future sexual partners about these results but do not have to disclose this information to anyone else.



How to prevent transmission of HIV to others?

The Public Health Department recommends the following precautions to prevent transmission of the virus:

- Do not donate blood, sperm or other tissue.
- Do not share toothbrushes, razors or any other item that may be contaminated with blood.
- Electrolysis, ear piercing and tattooing may expose you to bacteria or others to your virus.
- Do not share needles for any purpose; free needles are available through StreetWorks, the needle exchange program (905) 984-8684.
- Clean up spills of blood with detergent and water, then soak the surface with 10% bleach solution for 10 minutes.
- Consult with your doctor before planning a pregnancy; you could transmit HIV to your baby during pregnancy.
- There are medications, which can reduce the chance of this happening when you are pregnant.

You can have sex, but please remember...

- Encourage your present and recent past sexual partners to read this information, see their doctor or sexual health nurse and consider being tested for HIV.
- The public health department recommends the proper, consistent use of latex condoms during oral, vaginal or anal intercourse. Condoms also reduce the risk of pregnancy and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), which can damage your immune system and your health. Condoms prevent you from becoming infected with another strain of HIV.
- Kissing has never transmitted HIV.
- Oral sex is considered a real but low risk for transmission.
- Sexual activities that cause bleeding, swelling or irritation to the anus or vagina can increase the risk of transmission.
- There is a legal requirement to disclose your HIV status to all-future sexual partners and needle-sharing partners.