

**WE R NATIVE.  
WE R PROUD.**



**PROTECT YOURSELF AND THOSE YOU LOVE.**

## WHAT IS HIV?

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus that attacks and weakens the cells in your body that protect it from disease infection.

### WHO CAN GET IT?

Despite what many think, HIV is everywhere and can infect anyone. It's in cities, the country, and on reservations. Young people are at particular risk. Half of new HIV infections occur among teens and young adults.

### HOW DOES SOMEONE GET HIV?

HIV is spread when infected body fluids from one person enter the body of another. Pre-cum, semen, vaginal fluids, blood, and breast milk can all transmit HIV. HIV is most often spread during unprotected sex (anal, vaginal, or oral sex) or by sharing used needles.

### PROTECT YOURSELF.

- Use condoms every time you have sex. When used correctly, condoms are highly effective preventing the spread of HIV and many other STDs.
- Avoid drugs and alcohol. Using drugs and alcohol can increase your risk of HIV infection by making you do things you normally wouldn't (like having sex or not using a condom).
- Never share needles. Never.
- Get tested for STDs and HIV. Especially before starting a new relationship. And make sure your new partner does too.

>> THINK THAT SEX FEELS BETTER WITHOUT A CONDOM? BEING STD/HIV-FREE FEELS EVEN BETTER. <<

## TALK TO YOUR PARTNER ABOUT CONDOMS. TESTING. AND YOUR STD/HIV STATUS

It might feel a bit awkward, but nothing in a relationship is more important than good communication. Here are some tips that can help get the conversation started...

- **Feel confident – you're doing the right thing!** Many people are happy to find out how supportive their partner is, and how this conversation actually brings them closer together.
- **Time it right.** Plan the conversation. Start when you have time and privacy, and before things start to heat up. Explain this isn't about trust. You've been reading up, and many people with STDs and HIV don't even know they have it.
- **Try saying something like,** "I'm kind of nervous to put this out there...but I think it's important that we use condoms until we get tested together. The only sure way for us to know is to get tested."
- **After you've said it, listen.** Ask your partner what he or she thinks about testing. If your partner is reluctant, you may want to consider whether this is someone you want a relationship with.
- **Share your results.** Your partner will appreciate it. And ask that they do the same for you.

## PROTECT YOURSELF AND THOSE YOU LOVE

- Find your nearest STD/HIV testing site at [Get Yourself Tested \(www.GYTNOW.org\)](http://GetYourselfTested.com).
- Learn more at [www.WERNATIVE.org](http://www.WERNATIVE.org) or text NATIVE to 24587.