



**Know the  
HIV risk**

# People who experience gender based violence are more at risk of HIV.

HIV – Human Immunodeficiency Virus – is the virus that causes AIDS by interfering with the body's ability to fight off infections.

A person who is living with HIV or who has tested positive for HIV may develop AIDS if not on treatment.

HIV is spread through contact with the blood, semen, pre-seminal fluid, rectal fluids, vaginal fluids, or breast milk of a person with HIV. Vaginal and anal sex or sharing drug injecting equipment are the main ways that HIV is spread.

You can prevent HIV by not having sex or sharing needles and by using condoms correctly every time you have sex.

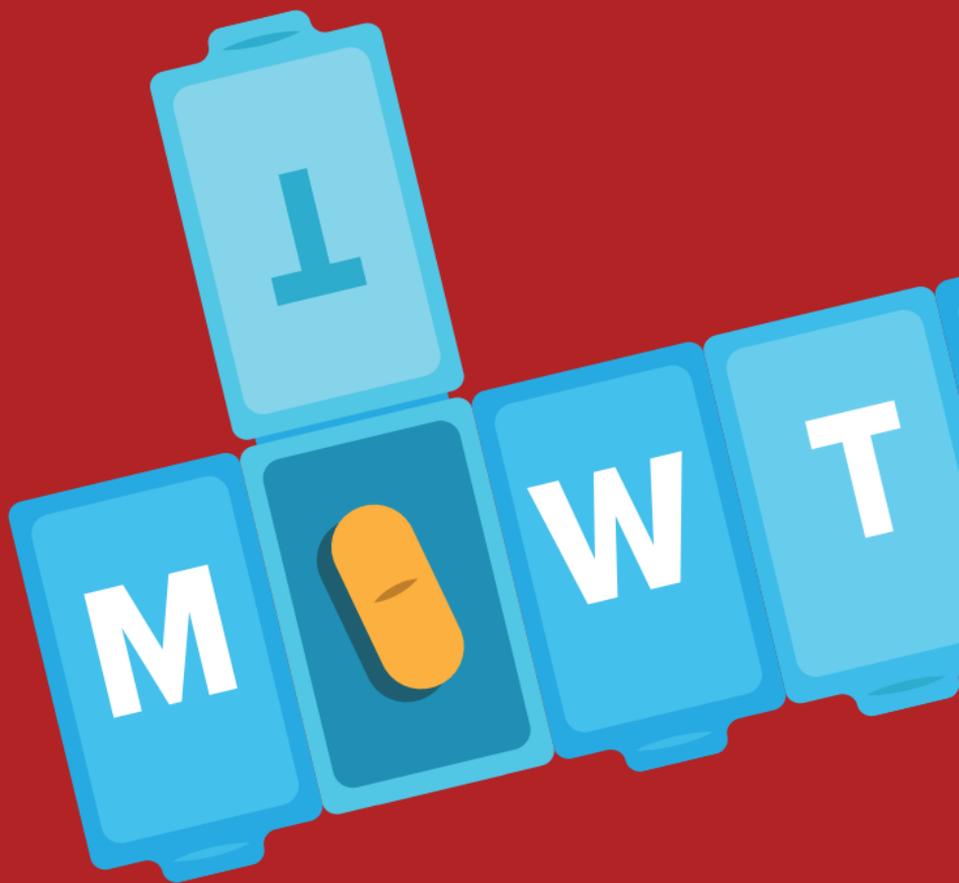
HIV is not curable but it is treatable with antiretroviral medicines, called ARVs. If you are HIV positive, it is important to start taking ARVs as soon as possible.

## Get tested for HIV.

It is a quick, free  
finger prick test.



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**The ART of  
living with HIV**

# Taking ART prolongs the lives of people living with HIV and helps prevent the spread of HIV.

Antiretrovirals (ARVs) are the medicines used to treat people living with HIV and AIDS. ART is Antiretroviral Therapy – the combination of ARVs used to treat people with HIV and AIDS.

To be effective, ART must be taken every day at the same time. All the medicines are now combined into one pill and the newer ARVs have fewer side-effects.

When people living with HIV are correctly treated with ARVs, the amount of HIV in their blood (viral load) can drop to almost undetectable levels. This means that they are much less likely to transmit HIV to others.

So ART not only keeps people living with HIV healthy, it is also one of the ways to prevent the spread of HIV.

## Get onto treatment.

ART is available for free at any clinic or hospital.



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**Get PEP to  
prevent HIV**

# PEP can stop victims of rape from getting HIV.

Post Exposure Prophylaxis for HIV includes a course of ARVs given to people who may have been exposed to HIV (such as rape victims or health workers with needle-stick injuries) to prevent them from becoming HIV positive.

To be effective, PEP must be started as soon as possible (within 72 hours) after the rape and the entire 28-day course must be taken as prescribed by the doctor.

Only people who are HIV negative can take PEP so people are tested for HIV before they are given PEP.

You may experience side-effects such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, headaches and tiredness but it is very important to keep taking PEP and finish the course. These side effects are normal but if you are worried, ask your health care professional. A counsellor or support group can help you to keep taking your medication.

There is a small potential risk of getting HIV, even with PEP. It is important to be tested for HIV again 6 weeks and 3 months after the rape and to practice safe sex until the 3 month HIV test.

**Get PEP as soon  
as possible.**

It is free and available  
from clinics or hospitals.



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**Fight for your  
SRH rights**

# Sexual & reproductive health is important for victims of gender based violence.

If a woman is raped, she will be offered **emergency contraception**, also called the morning after pill. These are birth control pills taken after unprotected sex to prevent pregnancy and are provided to women who can get pregnant, up to 120 hours or 5 days after the rape.

Women who have been raped and who become pregnant as a result, may choose to **terminate the pregnancy**. Women in South Africa have the right to access safe and legal abortion up to 20 weeks performed by a nurse (up to 12 weeks) or a doctor (after 12 weeks). Ask your counsellor for more information or support.

**Sexually Transmitted Infections** (STIs) are infections passed from one person to another through unprotected sex or genital contact, including HIV. People who have been raped are vulnerable to STIs. Most STIs are treatable and many are curable.

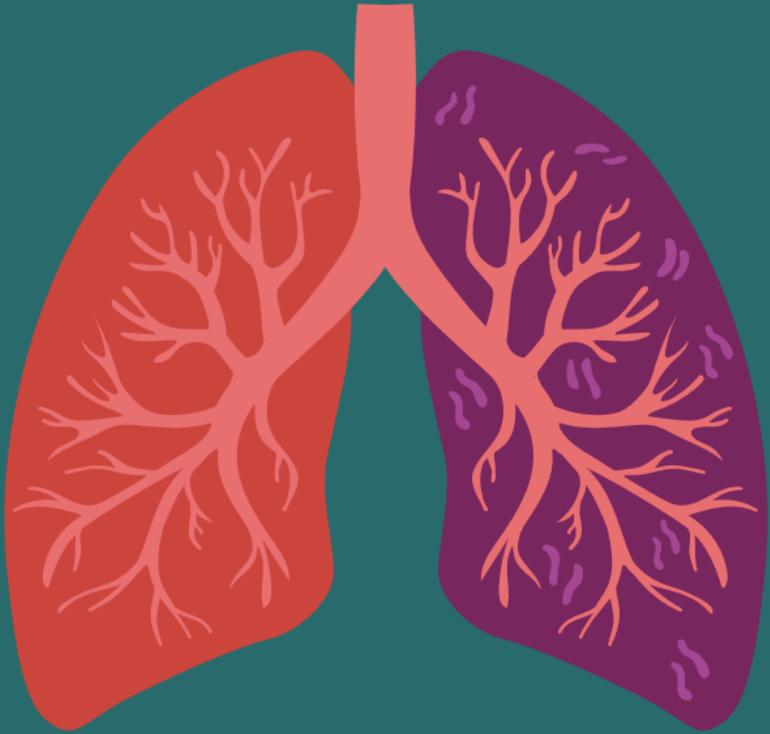
Effective **contraception** such as the pill, coil or injection will prevent pregnancy in most cases. Condoms are the only contraceptives that protect against pregnancy and STIs, including HIV, but they are not as effective at preventing pregnancy.

**Know your SRH rights.**

Access these services  
at clinics or hospitals.



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**Get on  
top of TB**

# Rates of TB are very high in communities but it is curable if treated.

Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease caused by a bacteria called Mycobacterium Tuberculosis that most often affects the lungs. It can also affect other parts of the body.

TB is spread through the air from one infected person to another. You can get TB if you are in close contact with an infected person when they cough, talk, laugh, spit, sing or sneeze.

## The signs of TB are:

- Cough for more than 2 weeks
- Chest pains
- Lack of appetite (not being hungry)
- Unexplained weight loss
- Fever and night sweats
- Tiredness

**If you or someone you know has these signs, go to the clinic and ask to be tested for TB.** You will need to return to the clinic at a later date for your results.

**TB is curable and treatment is free.**

It is important to start treatment as soon as possible and finish your treatment.



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**Watch for the  
signs of IPV**

# People are often at greater risk of violence at home than on the street.

Intimate Partner Violence (sometimes called domestic violence) refers to any behaviour within a current or ex-partner intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm to either partner.

The violence can be physical violence, emotional (psychological) abuse, sexual violence or financial abuse. Threats and controlling behaviour are a form of violence.

There are many signs of IPV but the most common one is fear of your partner. Other signs include a partner who puts you down or tries to control you and feelings of self-loathing, helplessness and desperation.

IPV can have a severe impact on health, causing depression and anxiety, injury, HIV and sometimes even death.

People experiencing IPV can apply for a protection order at any police station. There are shelters or places of safety available for victims of IPV.

**The violence is  
not your fault.**

You have a right to  
be safe and live a life  
free from violence.



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