

How are drug use and HIV related? - Substance Abuse, part 1



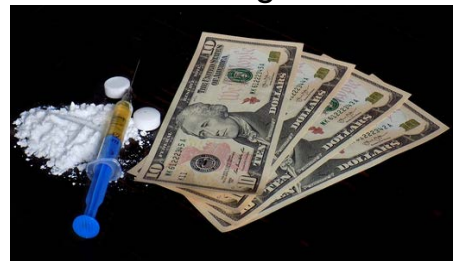
Drug use can play a major role in the spread of HIV. For example, injection drug use is responsible for about 10% of HIV cases in the United States each year.

If you inject drugs, you can get HIV from sharing drug preparation and injecting equipment or “works” with a person who has HIV.

This is how HIV can be passed between you, the people you use drugs with, and your sexual partners. Taking drugs can increase your risk not only for HIV but also for other sexually transmitted diseases or STDs.

Being high affects your ability to make safe choices and increases the chance you will take risks. This could include having sex without condoms or having sex with multiple partners.

Trading sex for drugs or money can also increase your chance of getting HIV. If you use drugs, you are at a higher risk for HIV infection and should get tested.



If you already have HIV, taking drugs can affect your immune system and may make your HIV infection worse.

Taking drugs also can affect your HIV **treatment adherence**, which means taking your medicine correctly every day. While you are high, you might forget to take your medicine on time, or at all.



Be sure to get answers to any questions you have about HIV/AIDS. Your public health department, health care provider, and public library can help.

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