

Injected drugs and HIV risk - Substance Abuse, part 3

Injected drugs are drugs that are put into your bloodstream using a needle and syringe.

If you share drug preparation and injecting equipment or "works" with someone who is HIV-positive, that person's blood can stay on the needles or spread to the drug solution. In that case, you can inject HIV directly into your body. It is important to know that sharing a needle or syringe for **any** use can put you at risk for HIV.



Also, when you are high, you're more likely to have risky sex. This increases the chance of getting or spreading HIV.



Hepatitis B virus and hepatitis C are also common among people who have HIV, or are at risk of HIV infection. Nearly 8 of 10 injection drug users in the U.S. who are HIV-positive are also infected with Hepatitis C.

Hepatitis C is more serious for people living with HIV because it triples the risk for liver disease and failure. So it's important for HIV positive people who inject drugs to know whether they are also infected with Hepatitis C.

Stopping injection drug use can greatly lower your chances of getting or spreading HIV. Talk with your healthcare provider about treatment programs.

If you keep injecting drugs, use only sterile needles and works. **Never** share the needles or works.

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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