

**Appointment line: 07768 921673.**

Use this number to book appointments for any of the clinics. If your problem is urgent, we will do our best to help you be seen as soon as possible. If you have any questions please contact us to speak to a member of staff. If you leave a message we will return your call as soon as possible.

**Your own GP** – Your doctor should be able to help you if you have any sexual health concerns, or advise you where you can go.

**Family Planning in Lanarkshire** – 07789 928710  
For details of your nearest family planning service

**Lanarkshire HIV, AIDS and Hepatitis Centre**  
– 01236 712247 (24-hour answering service)

**Sexual Health Line** – 0800 567 123

This line gives advice on all sexually transmitted infections. Lines are open 24 hours. The call is free and the phone number will not appear on your landline bill. Mobile phone costs vary.

**Gay & Lesbian Switchboard** – 0141 847 0447  
7pm to 10pm, [www.sgls.co.uk](http://www.sgls.co.uk)

**Equal** – [www.equalonline.co.uk](http://www.equalonline.co.uk)

Sexual health information website for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Community in the West of Scotland

If you are sexually active, sexual health clinics are happy to see you for a routine check-up, even if you are feeling well.

For more information, or other leaflets, contact:

**Health Promotion Resource Library**, First Floor,  
Law House, Airdrie Road, Carluke ML8 5ER  
Phone: 01698 377600 Fax: 01698 377726

[www.lanarkshiresexualhealth.org](http://www.lanarkshiresexualhealth.org)

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**164 HIV**



# HIV and AIDS

Sexual Health Information



## What is HIV?

HIV is short for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. It is a virus that attacks the body's defence system (called the immune system). HIV can lead to AIDS.

## What is AIDS?

AIDS is short for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. AIDS is the collection of infections and illnesses that you can get if your immune system has been damaged by HIV. Most people with AIDS feel well most of the time and many of the infections are becoming easier to treat. However, as the body's immune system becomes weaker, these infections become more difficult to treat.

A person is called HIV-positive if antibodies to HIV have been found in their blood. It can take up to three months after the infection has happened for the antibodies to develop. People cannot catch AIDS but they can get HIV, the virus that can lead to AIDS.

## How can you get HIV?

HIV can only be passed on in certain ways. You can get it from the blood (including the blood from a period), semen or vaginal fluid of someone with HIV. These are the three most common ways you can get HIV.

- By having penetrative sex (vaginal or anal) with someone who has HIV or AIDS without using a condom.
- By sharing needles or other injecting equipment with someone who has HIV or AIDS.
- A mother who has HIV or AIDS can pass it on to her unborn child.

You cannot get HIV by sharing toilets with, living with, working with, shaking hands with, kissing or hugging someone who has HIV or AIDS.

## Safer sex

Sex is a normal and healthy part of our lives. Sex can be fun, exciting, wonderful and loving. If you are having sex, it is important that you protect

yourself and your partner from HIV, the virus that can lead to AIDS. The good news is that sex can be made less risky and still be great fun!

## How to stay sexy and healthy

You don't always need to have penetrative sex to have fun. Why not try kissing, hugging, stroking, massaging, masturbating (wanking) and body rubbing? All of these are safe as long as there is no blood.

Sex toys are safe as long as you don't share them. If you do share them, you can reduce the risk of infection by using a condom over the sex toy. But you must change the condom or wash the toy with hot soapy water each time you transfer it from one person to another.

## Drugs and HIV

Never share needles or other injecting equipment. You are at risk if the blood from an infected person gets into your bloodstream. HIV lives in the bloodstream. Small amounts of blood may stay inside or on the injecting equipment (needles, syringes, spoons or filters) and get into the bloodstream of the next person who uses the equipment.

Sharing equipment, even with friends, is very dangerous. If you have penetrative sex with anyone who has shared or is sharing needles, you must always use a condom.

You can buy new needles or get them free from needle exchanges. If you cannot get new equipment it is possible to clean existing equipment. We do not recommend you do this unless it is an emergency and you have no choice but to use old equipment. This is what to do.

- Flush out the syringe with clean, cold water. Do this three times.
- Draw thin household bleach through the needle into the syringe. Leave some air in it and shake it for at least 30 seconds. Squirt the bleach down the drain or toilet. Do this twice.

- Flush out the syringe and needle again with fresh cold water. Do this at least five times.

## Condoms

Using condoms and lubricant means more comfort and safety. Not using any, or not using enough lube can make condoms more likely to break or come off. If used correctly, 'regular thickness' condoms and lubricant can be just as safe for anal sex. Don't use the same condom for more than 45 minutes. Check the condom is okay regularly and apply more lube each time. Condoms come in all shapes and sizes - use the right one for you.

Use non-spermicidal condoms for anal sex. You should also use a water-based lubricant like K-Y Jelly, Liquid Silk or Aquagel.

You can also get female condoms called Femidoms. They are a tube shape made of very thin material which lines the vagina. You can get free condoms and safer sex advice from any GUM clinic.

## 'C' Card Scheme

You can get free condoms and lube from more than 75 outlets, including some pharmacies, across Lanarkshire. Phone 01698 85 55 88 or visit [www.lanarkshiresexualhealth.org](http://www.lanarkshiresexualhealth.org) to find your nearest outlet.

## Talking about sex

Some people find it hard to talk about condoms and safer sex. It's important to choose a time when you and your partner are both relaxed. Remember it's very difficult to talk about safer sex when you are drunk, tired or already in the mood! Be honest about what you want. Tell your partner that you want to use a condom. If you are having sex with someone of the opposite sex, you could suggest using the condom as contraception. By using a condom you are protecting your partner's health as well as your own.