



- If you choose to have sex, use a condom every time. When used the right way, latex condoms can help protect you from HIV and other STDs. While condoms aren't 100% effective, they are the best protection available for people who have sex.
  - Stay with one partner who only has sex with you and does not inject drugs. Use condoms unless tests show you and your partner do not have HIV.
  - Never share needles or other "works" to shoot drugs or for anything else (piercing, tattoos).
10. What else can women do to stay healthy?
- If you have sex, get tested for HIV and other STDs. The only way to be sure you have or don't have HIV or other STDs is to get tested at a doctor's office or STD clinic. Ask your sex partner(s) to get tested, too.

- See a doctor right away if you have an unusual discharge or notice any rashes, sores or bumps on your body. If you think you have been at risk for HIV or any other STD, get a test.
- If you have an STD, make sure both you and your partner finish treatment before having sex again.

Take care of each other.  
Share this information  
with women you know.

Contact the Philadelphia Department of Public Health for health centers near you that provide HIV/STD testing and prenatal care regardless of ability to pay, [www.phila.gov](http://www.phila.gov) or 215-985-2437.

If you have HIV and are pregnant, you may be eligible for Philadelphia's pregnancy medical case management services through ActionAIDS. Ask your provider or call 215-243-2800 for more information.



# 10 Questions

## About Pregnancy and HIV

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## 1. Do I need to get tested for HIV if I'm pregnant?

Yes. Pregnant women should get tested for HIV at the first prenatal visit and during the third trimester of each pregnancy. Some pregnant women and their newborns may also need HIV testing at the time of birth.

## 2. Why do pregnant women need to be tested?

About one in five people living with HIV in the U.S. do not know they have it. Even if you do not think you are at risk for HIV, it is best to know your HIV status for your health and your baby's health.

## 3. How does HIV get from the mother to the baby?

A mother with HIV can pass it to her baby in the womb, during birth or when she breastfeeds. Without HIV treatment, about one in four babies born to HIV-positive mothers will be born with HIV.

## 4. What can be done for my baby if I have HIV?

When taken as directed, anti-HIV medicines can greatly reduce the chances of a mother passing HIV to her baby. If you have HIV, your doctor will discuss treatment options with you. You should not breastfeed if you have HIV, even if you are on medication.

If you are HIV-positive and are not in care, see a doctor as soon as you think you are pregnant. Getting into care will help you stay healthy and reduce the chances of your baby being born with HIV.

## 5. What can be done for me?

New treatment options can help many people with HIV to stay healthy and live long lives. The sooner you find out you have HIV, the more options you have for treating it. You can also take steps to avoid passing HIV to other people, starting with your baby.

## 6. If I think I'm pregnant, when should I start prenatal care?

As soon as you think you might be pregnant, you should go to the doctor. Starting care early and getting frequent checkups will help you and your baby stay healthy.

## 7. What are the benefits of prenatal care?

Prenatal care allows your doctor to check the progress of your pregnancy and look for problems. If there are any problems, they can be treated right away.

## 8. Should I be tested for other STDs\*?

Yes. All pregnant women should be tested for syphilis at their first prenatal visit and at birth.

Without treatment, syphilis can cause major problems for the baby during pregnancy and at birth, including blindness, deafness, brain damage and even death. If caught early, syphilis can be cured before any of this happens.

It is also a good idea to be tested for gonorrhea and chlamydia at your first prenatal visit.

\* "STDs" stands for "sexually transmitted diseases."

## 9. What can I do to avoid getting HIV?

- The only sure way to avoid getting HIV through sex is by not having sex (abstinence). Vaginal, oral and anal sex can all pass HIV and other STDs from one person to another.