

BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT HIV



GÖTEBORGS KYRKLIGA
STADSMISSION

What is HIV?

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus that breaks down the immune system, the body's defense mechanism against diseases and infections. With today's treatment methods, HIV is a chronic infection and not a life-threatening disease. HIV is not the same thing as AIDS. AIDS is the collective name for the HIV related illnesses that can develop if the immune system has been crippled by the virus. Today's medicines control the virus level to the extent that HIV does not have an effect on the immune system; therefore AIDS cannot develop.

Living with HIV and treatment

HIV is something you live with. There is no cure HIV, but with medication, a person with HIV may have a long life and feel good. It is important to take medication and go to the doctor if you have HIV. There are good medications against HIV and people with HIV can live as long as people without HIV. A life with HIV implies medication and for many people this can mean side effects. People who have HIV will always have HIV in their body. Effective treatment will often reduce the viral load to undetectable levels. It is possible that a person in treatment never even feels ill. Moreover, when the treatment is working there is almost no risk of transmitting the virus.

Get tested – get treated

Taking the test is the only way to find out whether or not you are infected with HIV. Today's treatment is very effective. If you test positive, you can access treatment and medication. If you know your HIV status you can take care of your own health as well as other's health. The majority of people who contract HIV get it from a person who is unaware that they are positive. Testing is an effective way to reduce the transmission of HIV.

You may want to take the test if...

- You had unprotected sex
- You have had or have multiple sex partners
- You are pregnant or want to have a baby
- Wife/girlfriend is pregnant
- You want to get married or start a sexual relationship
- You use drugs intravenously

Who can get HIV?

Anyone can be infected with HIV, no matter the age, gender, race or ethnic origin or whom you have sex with.

How is HIV transmitted?

There are only a few ways HIV can be transmitted.

- Unprotected sex.
- Blood. For example if you use drugs intravenously and share needles.
- From mother to baby during pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding.

That's it. There are no other ways HIV can be transmitted and these mentioned above regard untreated HIV.

HIV can't survive outside the body. It is not transmittable via water, air or surfaces such as cutlery, bed sheets, towels or toilet seats. There is no risk of the virus being transmitted through kissing, coughs or sneezes. A person cannot get HIV by talking, hugging, shaking hands, working or eating with someone who has HIV. HIV cannot pass through healthy, unbroken skin.

Other places to get tested in Gothenburg

Checkpoint Göteborg, performs free of charge HIV tests. Drop-in on Tuesdays (non-holidays) 18.00-20.00. Address: Stora Badhusgatan 6, Göteborg.

Infektionsmottagning (Infections Clinic) performs HIV testing and testing for sexually transmitted diseases by appointment. For an appointment call: 031- 343 44 92; 031- 343 55 22; 031- 343 42 84; 031- 343 48 63; 031- 343 42 87. Address: Plan 1, Östra Sjukhuset, 41650 Göteborg.

Könsmottagningen Sahlgrenska (Clinic for STIs) performs tests (free of charge) for sexually transmitted infections (chlamydia, gonorrhoea, syphilis and HIV). Drop-in: Monday 07.30-09.30; Wednesday 07.30-09.30; Thursday 13.00-17.30; Friday 07.30-09.30. Address: Plan K, Sahlgrenska Sjukhuset, 413 46 Göteborg.

SMC Sexualmedicinskt centrum (Sexual Medicine Center) offers testing and counseling for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections including HIV testing with rapid response, contraceptive advice, sexual counseling, counselling about gender identity and sexual identity. Opening hours: Monday-Friday 08.00-17.00. Address: Kaserntorget 11A, 41118 Göteborg.

If you are under the age of 25, you can also take an HIV test at any youth clinic (Ungdomsmottagning)

Places to get tested in Malmö

Checkpoint Skåne, performs free of charge HIV tests. Drop-in on Tuesdays (non-holidays) 17.00-19.00. Address: Drottninggatan 36, Malmö.

Noaks Ark, performs free of charge HIV tests. Drop-in on Wednesdays (non-holidays) 17.00-19.00. You can also book an appointment by calling 040-611 52 15 or 072-020 15 48.

Centrum för sexuell hälsa (Center for sexual health) investigates, treats and monitors sexually transmitted infections such as chlamydia, herpes, gonorrhoea and syphilis. Offers help with testing and counseling on HIV. You can get advice on safer sex and contraception. Visits to the clinic are time booked and most are free. Address: Claesgatan 7, 214 26 Malmö. Open hours: Monday and Thursday 07.45-15.30; Tuesday 07.45-15.15 and 16.15-18.30; Wednesday and Friday 07.45-11.30; Telephone: 040 331747.

Places to get tested in Stockholm

Noaks Ark, performs free of charge HIV tests. Drop-in on Wednesdays (non-holidays) 15.00-18.00. There is a possibility to book a time by calling 020-78 44 40. Address: Birger Jarlsgatan 58, Stockholm.

Testpoint RFSL Stockholm, check the website <http://www.testpoint.se/> for updates on time and place.

HIV TESTS. FAST, ANONYMOUS, FREE.

At **Crossroads Göteborg** you can get information about HIV in Bulgarian, English, Italian, Spanish and Romanian. You can drop-in on specific days to take a test, anonymously and independently of the formal health services. It is free and you will get the result in 15 minutes.

When? May 9th; June 13th; September 5th; October 3rd; December 5th.

Where? Crossroads Göteborg, Andra Långgatan 17, 413 28 Göteborg, 031 755 36 82



Crossroads Göteborg
Andra Långgatan 17
413 28 Göteborg,
031-755 36 87

NEED ADVICE OR JUST WANT TO TALK TO SOME IN A SIMILAR SITUATION?

Positiva Gruppen Väst is a resource for people affected by HIV and gives advice, support and information. Positiva Gruppen Väst is an important forum for everyone who is affected by HIV, regardless of whether you are living with HIV, a partner, relative or friend, or if you are involved with HIV issues for some other reason.

Positiva Gruppen Väst, Nordhemsgatan 50, 413 06 Göteborg, kontoret@pgvast.se, 031 14 35 30



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