10. What else can I 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(s) finish treatment before having sex again.

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

Where can I learn more?
In Texas, call 2-1-1 toll-free to find HIV/STD testing, treatment, and prenatal care near you.

For other HIV/STD questions,
call 1 (800) CDC-INFO (English/Español)
or 1 (888) 232-6348 (TTY).
To learn more, go to

KNOW MY STATUS.ORG

TEXAS Health and Human Services | Texas Department of State Health Services

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10 Questions

About HIV, Syphilis, and Pregnancy

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

Yes. Pregnant women should get tested for HIV at their first prenatal visit and during the third trimester. Some pregnant women and their newborns may also need an HIV test when the baby is born.

2. Why do pregnant women need to be tested?

About one in six people living with HIV in Texas 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. You should also encourage your partner to get tested for HIV.

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

A mother living with HIV can pass it to her baby anytime during pregnancy, birth, and breastfeeding.

4. If I am living with HIV, what can I do to protect my baby?

The risk of passing HIV to your baby can be 1% or less if you:

- See your doctor regularly and take your HIV medicine as prescribed throughout pregnancy and birth.
- Give HIV medicine to your baby for 4-6 weeks after giving birth.
- Do NOT breastfeed or pre-chew your baby's food.

5. If I am living with HIV, what can I do to protect my health?

Treatment helps people living with HIV stay healthy and live long lives. Staying on treatment also reduces the risk of passing HIV to others.

6. Should I be tested for syphilis and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)?

Yes. All pregnant women should be tested for syphilis at their first prenatal visit, during their third trimester, and again at delivery.

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. These STDs can also cause problems during pregnancy and delivery.

7. 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. If you are worried about the cost of care or need to find a doctor, you can call 2-1-1 or go to yourtexasbenefits.com for help finding prenatal care.

8. 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 found and treated as soon as possible.

9. What can I do to reduce my chances of getting HIV or other STDs?

HIV and other STDs are mainly spread by having sex or sharing syringes and other injection equipment. There are many things you can do to protect yourself. Picking the right ways for you depends on your level of personal risk. Be honest with your healthcare provider about your sex life and drug use – they can help you understand your prevention options. The online risk reduction tool at wwwn.cdc.gov/hivrisk/ can help you learn more about these options.