

Some questions you may have

How will my identity be protected?

If you choose not to reveal your identity, your health professional or Partner Notification Officer will **NEVER** reveal your identity when contacting your partners.

Who are the people at risk of HIV?

Anyone who you have had unprotected sexual activity with (i.e. without a condom) or shared a needle with while you were infected with HIV may be at risk of HIV. Your health professional or Partner Notification Officers will help you identify these people.

What if I don't know the name or contact details of the person I had unprotected sex with?

Partner Notification Officers may be able to contact your partners even if you do not have their full name or contact details. The time and place of unprotected sex or identifying features or even an internet nickname may help the Partner Notification Officer to find your partners.

Will I be able to have sex again without infecting potential partner/s?

Yes. You can protect your partners by practicing safe sex (i.e. use a male or female condom and a water based lubricant every time you have sexual activity).

Will I be able to have children without infecting my child or partner with HIV?

Yes, you can. Your health professional can provide you with the information about how to have children without infecting your child and partner.

Information for people newly diagnosed with **HIV**

Partner Notification Officers

Address: Third Floor,
Melbourne Sexual Health Centre,
580 Swanston Street,
Carlton 3053

Phone: 03 9096 3367

Email: contact.tracers@health.vic.gov.au

Let your
partners
know

To receive this document in an accessible format phone 1300 651 160 or email <infectious.diseases@health.vic.gov.au>
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Let your partners know

You have just been given a diagnosis of HIV infection.

This may be a difficult time for you and you might still be struggling to come to terms with this diagnosis.

However, it is important to let your partner/s know as soon as possible that they have been at risk of HIV infection. Your health professional or Partner Notification Officers can help you through this process and ensure your identity is not revealed.

Why should you let your partners know?

- Your partners may have HIV without any symptoms and letting your partners know will allow them to get tested and treated.
- HIV is easily tested for and managed with long term medication.
- If people know they are infected with HIV, they can take steps to prevent further transmission to other people.

Important facts to know

- Most of the time, people diagnosed with HIV think they know who they got their infection from, but they are often wrong. It could be **ANYONE** they had unprotected sex with.
- Your regular partner may or may not be infected.
- Most people who have been through the process of partner notification realised that it was not as “stressful” or “embarrassing” as they thought it would be.

How to do it?

You can let your partners know by having a conversation with them (either face-to-face or by phone), or you can let them know without revealing your identity.

You can let your partners know on your own

If you chose to do this:

- Your health professional can discuss with you strategies on the best time and way to have the discussion with your partners.
- If you choose, you can also ask your health professional to be present when you have the conversation with your partners. They can help you answer technical questions and offer reassurance.

If you do NOT want to reveal your identity, you can get a Partner Notification Officer to tell your partner

If you chose to do this:

- You will need to provide information to Partner Notification Officers who would then contact your partners and advise them to get tested for HIV.
- The Partner Notification Officers will NEVER reveal your identity to your partners.

**Let your
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Partner Notification Officers

- Partner Notification Officers are trained and experienced health professionals that can help you with the partner notification process.
- They will ask you a range of questions, including sexual practices, to help you identify people at risk that will need to be contacted.
- They can answer any questions you may have about HIV prevention, treatment and the partner notification process and help you access appropriate supports and counselling services if required.
- You can contact a Partner Notification Officer directly or your doctor can contact them (refer to the back of this brochure for contact information).

Where to get further information or help

- Better Health Channel: www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au
- Melbourne Sexual Health Centre: www.mshc.org.au
- Victorian AIDS Council: www.vac.org.au
- Living Positive Victoria: www.livingpositivevictoria.org.au
- Positive Women: www.positivewomen.org.au
- Multicultural Health and Support Service: www.ceh.org.au/our-programs/our_programs_mhss