

## TESTING RESOURCES:

**Fenway Health's Ansin Building at 1340 Boylston Street**

- For STI testing, call 617.927.6000 to make an appointment with your provider.
- HIV testing can be done as part of a medical visit at your request.
- Check our website [www.fenwayhealth.org](http://www.fenwayhealth.org) for dates and times of our walk-in clinic.

**Fenway: Sixteen**

- For HIV testing, call 617.267.0159 to set up an appointment.
- Check our website [www.fenwayhealth.org](http://www.fenwayhealth.org) for walk-in clinic hours.

**Fenway: South End**

- Rapid HIV testing can be done as part of a medical visit at your request.
- Free HIV testing by appointment by calling 617.267.0159

**Sidney Borum, Jr. Health Center**

- The Borum serves young people ages 12–29.
- For HIV testing, call 617.457.8140

**Additional testing services:****[www.hivtest.org](http://www.hivtest.org)**

CDC search engine for STI and HIV testing clinics



**ANSIN BUILDING** 1340 Boylston Street Boston MA 02215  
**TEL** 617.267.0900 **WEB** [fenwayhealth.org](http://fenwayhealth.org)

*Funded by a grant from the BCBSMA Foundation Catalyst Fund*

## WHAT TO EXPECT FOR TESTING:

## STI:

- **Gonorrhea and Chlamydia** are tested through urine or culture swab.
- **Syphilis** is tested through blood draw.

## HIV:

○ **Blood testing**

- Blood is taken and sent to a lab to test for HIV antibodies.
- The test is highly accurate, although there is a waiting period during processing of lab specimen.
- Test has a 2-week “window period” after initial transmission where it might not detect infection.

○ **Rapid testing**

- **Either finger** stick for blood draw or oral swab specimen can be processed in a 20 minute period.
- This is the most common way to be tested today and it is widely available.
- Test has 2-8 week “window period” after initial transmission where it might not detect infection.

## SEXUAL HEALTH

Tips from the ***Take Charge of Your Health!*** series





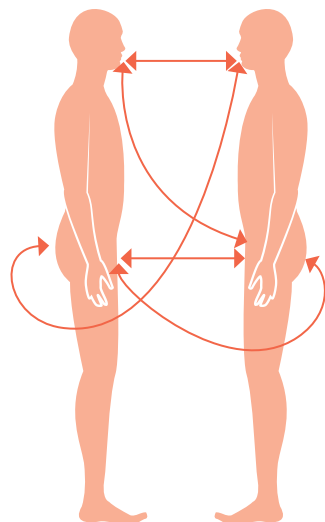
**SEX: ANY SEXUAL ACTIVITY INVOLVING YOUR PENIS, VAGINA, ANUS, MOUTH, AND/OR OTHER BODY PARTS.**

## SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS AND HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

### HIERARCHY OF RISK OF TRANSMISSION (FROM LOW-HIGH):

Each STI has its own most efficient transmission route, but there are general methods of transmission that apply to most STIs.

- |              |                                   |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| LOW<br>RISK  | Deep kissing                      |
|              | Giving/receiving oral sex         |
|              | Sharing sex toys                  |
|              | Insertive unprotected vaginal sex |
|              | Insertive unprotected anal sex    |
| HIGH<br>RISK | Receptive unprotected vaginal sex |
|              | Receptive unprotected anal sex    |



### Gonorrhea and Chlamydia

**What are they?** Bacterial infections

**Method of transmission:** Some are spread by skin-to-skin contact, others by exchange of fluids from urethra, vagina and cervix

**Reduce the risk!** Get annual screenings regardless of whether you're experiencing symptoms

### Hepatitis

**What is it?** Three types of viral infections: Hepatitis A (HAV), Hepatitis B (HBV), Hepatitis C (HCV)

**Method of transmission:** **HAV:** contact with fecal matter from a HAV+ person **HBV:** blood, bodily fluids, shared drug injection equipment **HCV:** blood from a person infected with HCV—most commonly from shared drug injection equipment, less commonly from sexual contact and sharing personal care items that have come in contact with blood, such as razors or toothbrushes

**Reduce the risk!** Get vaccinated against Hepatitis A and B. Use barriers to prevent transmission. Don't share drug injection equipment, wash hands before and after drug preparation

### Herpes

**What is it?** A viral infection caused by one of two strains: HSV-1, or more commonly HSV-2

**Method of transmission:** Exposure to infected skin or an active sore during oral, anal, or vaginal sex

**Reduce the risk!** Body can shed the virus even when there are no symptoms so use barriers to protect you

### HIV

**What is it?** Human Immunodeficiency Virus.

**Method of transmission:** Blood, semen, vaginal secretions, pre-cum, breast milk

**Reduce the risk!** Use barriers to limit exposure to fluids which transmit HIV. Remember the continuum of risk and opt for low-risk pleasure

### HPV

**What is it?** Human papillomavirus (HPV)

**Method of transmission:** Exposure to infected skin or a wart during oral, anal, or vaginal sex

**Reduce the risk!** Get the HPV vaccine to protect against high-risk strains if you're eligible. The body will clear most infections on its own, but you should use barriers to protect you

### Syphilis

**What is it?** A bacterial infection

**Method of transmission:** Exposure to infected skin or an active sore during oral, anal, or vaginal sex

**Reduce the risk!** Get annual screenings regardless of whether you're experiencing symptoms

### STEPS TO REDUCE RISK:

- Talk with your partners about past experiences so you know what you're exposing each other to.
- Negotiate use of barriers with partners to protect both of you (male condoms, female condoms, dental dams, gloves, etc.)
- Barriers are especially important when sex acts might cause abrasions
- Wash sex toys when switching between partners or body parts
- Communicate with your partner and set clear boundaries about what behaviors are okay and what might make you uncomfortable.

When negotiating sexual health, it's just as important to talk about pleasure with a partner as it is to negotiate risk. Some conversation starters when talking about pleasure might include:

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| ○ Can you touch me ____?     | ○ I think it's hot when you do _____ to me. |
| ○ I need you to _____.       | ○ Would you like it if I ____?              |
| ○ I like it when _____.      | ○ Are you into this?                        |
| ○ I don't like it when ____. |   |