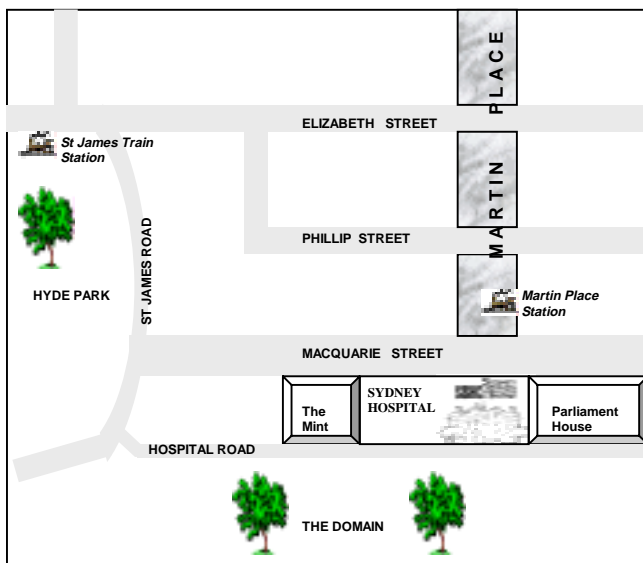


Sydney Sexual Health Centre



The Sydney Sexual Health Centre provides a free, confidential and comprehensive service that helps put you in control of your sexual health. The service supports your sexual health by providing screening, vaccination and management of sexually transmissible infections including HIV and hepatitis B, hepatitis C, women's and mens sexual health care, education, individual and couple counselling and needle and syringe exchange. The service offers a choice of male and female doctors, nurses and counsellors who are respectful of your lifestyle and sexuality.

CENTRE HOURS:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 10am to 6pm
Wednesday 2pm to 6pm

NO MEDICARE CARD REQUIRED

NSW SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES

Providing free and confidential
sexual health care.

Albury	Ph: (02) 6058 1831
Balranald	Ph: (03) 5027 2345
Broken Hill	Ph: (08) 8088 5800
Canterbury	Ph: (02) 9718 7655
Coffs Harbour	Ph: (02) 6659 1916
Dubbo	Ph: (02) 6885 1700
Forster	Ph: (02) 6555 6822
Gosford	Ph: (02) 4320 2114
Goulburn	Ph: (02) 4827 3470
Katoomba	Ph: (02) 4780 6060
Kings Cross	Ph: (02) 9360 2766
Kogarah	Ph: (02) 9350 2742
Lismore	Ph: (02) 6620 2980
Liverpool	Ph: (02) 9827 8022
Manly	Ph: (02) 9977 3288
Marrickville	Ph: (02) 9560 3057
Newcastle	Ph: (02) 4923 6909
Nowra	Ph: (02) 4423 9353
Orange	Ph: (02) 6361 9906
Parramatta	Ph: (02) 9843 3124
Penrith	Ph: (02) 4724 2507
Port Kembla	Ph: (02) 4276 2399
Richmond	Ph: (02) 4578 1622
St Leonards	Ph: (02) 9926 7414
Sydney City	Ph: (02) 9382 7440
Tamworth	Ph: (02) 6766 3095
Taree	Ph: (02) 6551 1315
Wagga Wagga	Ph: (02) 6938 6492

Telephone numbers are correct at time of publication but are not continually updated. You may need to check the numbers in the telephone directory.

**HIV
INFECTION
A.I.D.S.**



**Level 3, Nightingale Wing
Sydney Hospital
Macquarie Street Sydney, NSW 2000**

Telephone: 02 9382 7440

Freecall: 1800 451 624 (outside Sydney)

TTY: 9221 6515

Fax: 02 93827475

What are HIV and AIDS?

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is a virus which causes a lifelong infection which usually causes damage to the body's immune system. AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) is a late form of infection with HIV. AIDS conditions (serious infections or cancers indicating a damaged immune system) occur on average about 10 years after becoming infected with HIV. However, the time to developing AIDS may range between 1 and more than 20 years. Treatment usually extends the period before developing AIDS.

How does someone catch HIV?

HIV is **commonly** transmitted by:

- vaginal intercourse without a condom (man to woman and woman to man).
- anal sex without a condom (both partners are at risk).
- sharing drug injecting equipment.
- an infected mother to her baby during pregnancy, at childbirth, or by breast feeding.

HIV is **rarely** transmitted by:

- vaginal or anal sex with proper use of a condom.
- oral sex without a condom (ejaculation increases the risk).
- fresh blood-contaminated sharp injuries or splashes eg. needle-stick injuries for health workers.

HIV was **previously** transmitted through transfusion of blood or blood-derived products from about 1980 through to early 1985.

HIV has **never** been reported as being transmitted by:

- kissing
- cuddling
- shaking hands
- sharing knives and forks, cups or glasses
- toilet seats or mosquitoes

What are the symptoms?

Most people with HIV look and feel perfectly healthy. More than half of people may develop a glandular fever like illness (with fever, sweats, diarrhoea, rash, mouth ulcers) between one and six weeks after becoming infected with HIV. This may last a few days to a few weeks. Many have no symptoms for several years. Some time later HIV may cause unexplained diarrhoea, weight loss, recurrent rashes, fever or one of the AIDS conditions. AIDS conditions include pneumonia, brain infections, skin cancers, severe fungal infections and many other problems. The symptoms will depend on the organ(s) most affected.

How does someone avoid becoming infected with HIV or infecting someone else?

There are a variety of ways to avoid the transmission of HIV. Individuals use different strategies and their choice may change over time.

They include:

- No sex and no injecting drugs.
- Sexual practices that do not include anal or vaginal penetration eg. Massage/body rubbing, mutual masturbation.
- Oral sex (fellatio, rimming and cunnilingus); HIV transmission by these means is rare and generally associated with ejaculation (cumming in someone's mouth). The decision about whether or not to engage in oral sex is a personal one dependant on a person accepting this minimal risk of transmitting HIV. Use of a condom or dental dam reduces this small risk further. However it should be noted that unprotected oral sex may be an efficient way to transmit other STDs.
- Anal or vaginal sex using a condom throughout intercourse on every occasion. Some may also use the added protection of combining this with withdrawal prior to ejaculation. Condoms can break or slip off if

they are not used properly. Read the instructions on the package and practice before relying on them for HIV protection.

- Always using new drug injecting equipment.
- Only having unprotected sex in a "closed" (monogamous) relationship if both people test negative for HIV and other STDs three or more months into the relationship. Both partners have to then avoid any risk outside the relationship.

Anyone who requires any more detailed advice about HIV transmission is welcome to talk to the counsellors, nurses or doctors at a sexual health service.

Is it worth getting tested for HIV?

While routinely offered at sexual health services and readily available through G.P's, being tested for HIV is entirely optional and should remain a personal decision. Testing is usually only done on coded specimens and the highest level of confidentiality should surround the test. The **advantages** of getting tested for HIV include:

- Modern treatment methods can extend the duration and the quality of life of people with HIV.
- People who know their HIV status may be better placed to make informed choices about their future life plans.
- Knowledge of HIV status may help some people to decide on their safer sex strategies.

Some **disadvantages** about being tested for HIV are:

- The anxious wait for the result
- Concerns about confidentiality and insurance status
- Some people misuse a negative result to think that prior risk behaviour was OK.
- Knowing about one's HIV infection can be stressful and frightening.