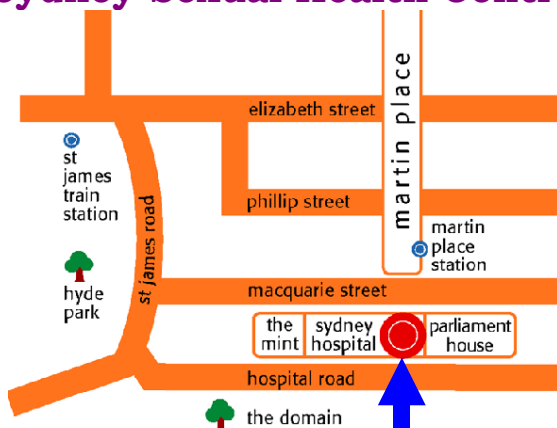


## Sydney Sexual Health Centre



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, women's and men's 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.

### NO MEDICARE CARD REQUIRED

#### Hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 10am-6pm  
 Wednesday 2pm to 6pm  
 Telephone: (02) 9382 7440

Sexual Health Infoline: 1800 451 624

**Monday - Friday 9am to 5:30pm**

Internet:

[www.sesahs.nsw.gov.au/sydhosp/SSHC.asp](http://www.sesahs.nsw.gov.au/sydhosp/SSHC.asp)

## NSW/ACT Sexual Health Services

### Free & confidential sexual health care

Albury	Ph: (02) 6058 1840
Armidale	Ph: (02) 6776 4738
Bourke	Ph: (02) 6872 2145
Broken Hill	Ph: (08) 8080 1556
Canberra	Ph: (02) 6244 2184
Coffs Harbour	Ph: (02) 6656 7865
Dareton	Ph: (03) 5021 7200
Dubbo	Ph: (02) 6885 1700
Forster	Ph: (02) 6555 6822
Gosford	Ph: (02) 4320 2114
Goulburn	Ph: (02) 4827 3913
Griffith	Ph: (02) 6966 9900
Katoomba	Ph: (02) 4784 6560
Kings Cross	Ph: (02) 9360 2766
Kogarah	Ph: (02) 9350 2742
Lightning Ridge	Ph: (02) 6829 1022
Lismore	Ph: (02) 6620 2980
Liverpool	Ph: (02) 9827 8022
Manly	Ph: (02) 9977 3288
Marrickville	Ph: (02) 9560 3057
Mt Druff	Ph: (02) 9881 1733
Newcastle	Ph: (02) 4923 6909
Nowra	Ph: (02) 4423 9353
Orange	Ph: (02) 6392 8600
Parramatta	Ph: (02) 9843 3124
Penrith	Ph: (02) 4734 2507
Port Kembla	Ph: (02) 4276 2399
Queanbeyan	Ph: (02) 6298 9233
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) 6592 9421
Wagga Wagga	Ph: (02) 6938 6492

English  
 October 2005  
 [SSH-7450]

want to know  
 more about

# Having a HIV Test

SYDNEY  
 SEXUAL  
 HEALTH  
 CENTRE  
**SSHC**

## What is HIV?

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus which destroys the body's natural ability to fight infections and some cancers.

## What is AIDS?

AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is a group of illnesses which occurs as a result of a weakened immune system in people who are infected with HIV. Without treatment of HIV, AIDS can occur several years after a person becomes infected with HIV.

### How does someone become infected with HIV?

An infected person can pass the virus on to someone else by the exchange of body fluids such as blood, semen and vaginal fluids.

HIV is transmitted by:

- vaginal or anal sexual intercourse without a condom
- sharing drug injecting equipment
- an infected mother to her baby during pregnancy, childbirth, or breast feeding.

HIV is rarely transmitted by:

- vaginal or anal sex using condoms correctly
- oral sex without a condom (though ejaculation could increase the risk)
- sharp injuries or splashes (e.g. needle-stick injuries for health care workers)

HIV has never been reported as being transmitted by:

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

### What is the HIV antibody test?

It is a blood test which detects HIV antibodies. Antibodies are produced by the body in response to an infection. If you are infected with HIV, then HIV antibodies will be present in your blood.

***It can take up to three months for HIV antibodies to develop after a person has been infected.***

Having a HIV test is entirely optional. If you request an HIV antibody test, you will have the opportunity to discuss the test and the possible implications of the results with a health care worker. If you decide to have an HIV test, it is completely confidential.

**HIV test results are only given in person, not by telephone.** The result takes about a week to come back to the clinic.

### What does a negative HIV antibody test result mean?

It means either:

- that a person has not been infected with HIV  
or

- that a person has been infected with HIV but has not yet produced antibodies. Remember it can take up to three months for antibodies to develop after infection with HIV.

### What does a positive HIV antibody test result mean?

A positive test means that a person has been infected with HIV. All positive tests are confirmed by further testing.

### Things to consider:

- Receiving a positive HIV antibody test result can be a traumatic event. Initial and ongoing support is available from this Centre and other agencies.
- Life insurance and visas for some countries can be restricted for people infected with HIV.
- Sometimes people with HIV experience discrimination, eg. in personal relationships, housing or employment.
- There is a legal requirement for people infected with HIV to inform present and future sexual partners.
- The Health Department receives statistics on the number of people with HIV or AIDS, but not names or addresses.
- All people thinking of being tested for HIV are invited to discuss any concerns with a counsellor, nurse or doctor.
- Any medical information or anything discussed at the Centre is confidential. Testing for HIV is always done on coded (not named) specimens.