

SEX GUIDES

ANAL SEX



#SEXWITHOUTSHAME

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A brief guide to being ready for anal sex

Anal sex can be a really amazing experience, and something that people can do and enjoy regardless of their sexuality, gender or trans status.

People will express their gender and sexuality in different ways and will use their bodies in different ways. There might be some stuff in this guide that is not relevant to you, but there is a little something for everyone!

We hope that this guide will help you to have better, safer and more satisfying anal sex!

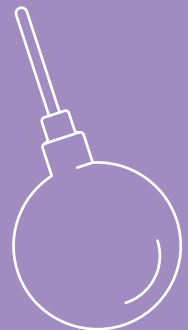




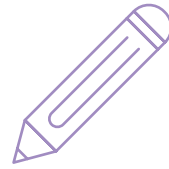
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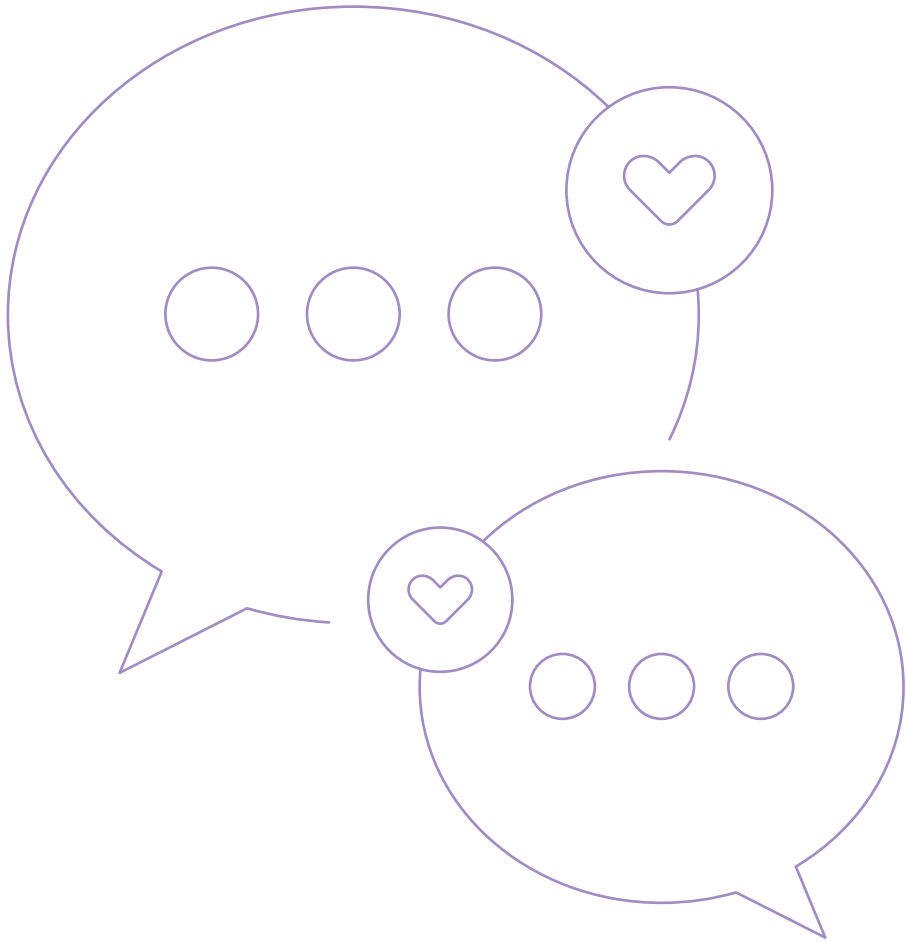


Anal sex glossary /anal slang



Anus	The arse hole.
Constipation	Needing to poo but not feeling able to.
Dental Dam	A small square of latex placed between the mouth and the body during oral sex to protect against STIs. They can be made from condoms.
Douching	Putting water in your arse or vagina to clean it. If you were born with a vagina it can be unhealthy to douche.
Ejaculate	Sometimes called cum, it is a fluid which comes out of the penis or vagina when people are sexually aroused. Cum from a penis usually has sperm in it, which can cause pregnancy if it gets inside the vagina of somebody who has a functional uterus.
Fingering	Stimulating the outside or inside of somebody's vulva, vagina, or arse hole using fingers.
Fisting	Putting a fist inside somebody's vagina or arse hole.
Foreplay	Things you can do before sex to make you and your partner(s) more aroused. This can including kissing, dirty talk, masturbation, role play or anything that gets you and your partner(s) in the mood.
Frenulum	The stretchy part of skin which connects the foreskin to the head of the penis.
HIV	A virus which can be passed on through sexual contact. It is carried in blood, semen, vaginal fluid and in anal mucus. There is not a high enough level of HIV in spit and pee to pass it on.
Laxatives	Something which makes you poo. This can be a medicine, or some types of food or drink.

Lube	A slippery liquid which can be put onto the penis, fingers, fists or sex toys before sex to help them go in, make it more comfortable and reduce the risk of tearing. We recommend using water or silicone based lube, depending on the type of sex you're having.
Masturbation	Stimulating your arse hole, penis, testicles, vagina, clitoris, and/or vulva with your hands and fingers, sex toys or other objects.
Penetrative	The person putting something inside someone's body, including a penis, a sex toy, or fingers. You may hear this called being a "top".
PEP	Short for Post-Exposure Prophylaxis, it is emergency medication that HIV negative people can take if they have been exposed to HIV within the last 72 hours. It is sometimes called PEPSE, for 'PEP after sexual exposure'.
PrEP	Short for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, PrEP is medication that HIV negative people can take to protect themselves from HIV.
Receptive	The partner(s) putting something inside someone's body, including a sex toy, penis, or fingers. You may hear this called "bottoming".
Rectum	The part of your intestine closest to your arse hole.
Rimming	Licking someone's anus.
Vers	Versatile, a term used to refer to someone who tops and bottoms.
Sexuality/ Sexual Orientation	Who someone is sexually attracted to, or has relationships with.
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections, which is any kind of disease passed on through sexual contact.
Thrush	A common yeast infection which can affect anyone and is usually found in moist areas of the body including the mouth, penis, and vagina. It is usually harmless but can be uncomfortable. Thrush is not classed as an STI.
Trans	Short for transgender, meaning somebody whose gender is different from the sex they were assigned at birth.



LET'S TALK ABOUT SEX!

Knowledge helps us to address anxiety and lets people take control of their sexual health. Talking to your partner(s) about what you want from the relationship and the sex you're having might be uncomfortable, but opening up this discussion can be a really useful tool to help you have healthy and happy relationships.

Don't be scared to advocate for your own sexual wellbeing – sex should be fun and give you the opportunity to explore your own wants and needs as well as those of your partner(s).

Finding out what you and your partner(s) like opens you up to having more of the sex you love, exploring passion, and pleasure. Whether you do or don't like penetration, if you're into sex toys or oral sex, or you want to try mutual masturbation, talk about this!

Communication is a really important part of sex, as it lets your partner(s) know that you are enjoying it and that you consent. Sexual consent should always be confident and enthusiastic! You and your partner(s)

can say no to sex at any point, even after sex has started. It is possible to consent to certain types of sex but not others, for example wanting to have oral sex but not anal. If your partner(s) says no at any point, you should be understanding and respect their boundaries.

It is normal for people to have different sex drives (how much you want to have sex). This can change, sometimes suddenly if you are stressed or you have started new medication, or it can be a gradual change over time. It can be frustrating if yours or your partner(s)' sex drive changes, but it is important to respect that their boundaries, and have an honest and open discussion about both of your needs.

If you would like any support with your sexual health and wellbeing, get in touch with LGBT Foundation's Sexual Health Team by emailing sexualhealth@lgbt.foundation or calling **0345 3 30 30 30**.

You'll also find loads of information, including a list of services we offer at lgbt.foundation/sexualhealth

FEELIN' MYSELF



Sex can be just as good solo as it can be with a partner(s).

Masturbation (sometimes called wanking) is normal and safe, and anyone can do it! Masturbation can be a fun and safe way to explore your own body and relax. It can help you understand what you do and don't like sexually, and get used to having parts of your body touched in a sexual way. Learning more about your body can improve your body image and help you feel more comfortable letting your partner(s) know what you like and don't like.

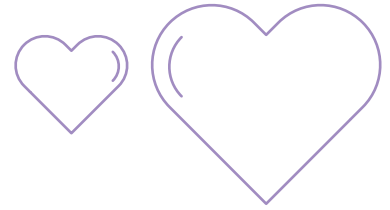
Some people get pleasure from touching their arse hole, penis, testicles, vagina, clitoris, and vulva. You could just use your hands and fingers, try rubbing against objects such as pillows, or use sex toys (for more info on sex toys, see our 'toy joy' section). If you're using sex toys, condoms can help you reduce the risk of transmitting STIs. Make sure to cover the sex toy with a new condom for each hole and partner. If you're using sex toys for anal masturbation, it's important that they

have a flared base so that they don't get stuck in your arse and need a hospital visit to remove!

Masturbating can lead to an orgasm, but you don't have to cum if you don't want to or can't. There's no right or wrong way to masturbate, and you can do it as little or as often as you like. If you're masturbating frequently or for longer sessions, lube can help you reduce friction and injury.

Some people masturbate together with their partner(s), which is called mutual masturbation. Remember that there is a risk of STI transmission if you touch somebody else's penis, vagina, or arse and then touch your own, or if you use a sex toy which somebody else has used before you without changing the condom.

KNOW YOUR BODY!



Changes in your body could indicate a problem such as an STI or other infection. For example, if your periods or discharge change in frequency, amount, colour, texture or smell this could be because something's not quite right.

To protect yourself, know what is normal for your body and if you're worried about any changes see a health professional, such as a doctor or nurse at a sexual health clinic.

If you're having regular unprotected sex, we recommend a full sexual health screening as often as every 3 months.

You can get a full screening at a sexual health (GUM) clinic. This service usually tests for HIV, chlamydia, syphilis and gonorrhoea. You'll pee in to a pot and swab your anus and/or vagina with a cotton bud, in a private space. Nurses will also draw bloods and take a swab from the back of your throat.

STRIKE A POSE!

If you are uncomfortable, sometimes it can help to try a different position!

Some positions mean that the penis, sex toy, or fingers can reach deeper, and they can put pressure on different parts of your arse, which can feel more uncomfortable for some people.

Different positions can also change the angle of penetration, and can give you better control of the speed. For example, being on top can allow you to take control of the speed and depth of the thrusts.

Being in a position where your knees are bent, like doggy style, or lying on your side or back with your knees to your chest, can help stop it feeling like you need to poo.



Will it hurt?

Anal sex is one of the many ways you can feel pleasure while knowing your body and experiencing something different, but people can be put off because they think it will hurt.

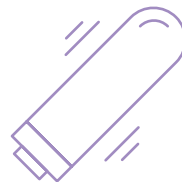
It is normal to worry about pain before having anal sex but it should not hurt. If it does, that is a sign that you might be tearing the lining of the anus, which can increase the risk of HIV or other STIs.

There are a lot of nerve endings all around the anus which can be stimulated by kissing, licking, running your finger around the anus and penetration, which is why anal sex can be so pleasurable. It is also why people are sometimes concerned about pain, and why it is important to take your time and even try experimenting on your own with sex toys or fingers.

You can also try experimenting on your own first, using butt plugs or anal beads to become familiar with the sensation and become more confident with inserting something larger.

Anuses do not produce their own lube so you need to make sure you are using enough! It can also hurt if you go too quickly or if you are not relaxed. It is always worth starting slow, and with a finger or two before inserting a penis, fist, or large sex toy into your arse.

If you are feeling nervous and tense, your arse hole will also be tense and so it will be tighter. This can make your skin more likely to tear as well, so if you are feeling nervous, let your partner(s) know, and take a few deep breaths to relax yourself. Always talk to your partner(s) if something is uncomfortable, and let them know if they do something that you really enjoy. Conversation can be sexy!



Will it get messy?

Sometimes during anal sex it can feel like you are full and like you need to go the bathroom. This is because usually, when there is something in your rectum it means you need to poo. This can then make you feel nervous which can make anal sex uncomfortable. It is important to remember that there is only normally poo if you need to go, so if you felt fine before, you are more than likely still fine. Check out page 14 "To Douche or not to Douche?" for more information on staying clean.

Anal sex can also stimulate the prostate if you have one, a gland which helps produce cum. It is usually found a few inches in, and is easier to stimulate with fingers if you curl your finger towards your partner(s)'s stomach. Some people really enjoy it, but for others it can make it feel like you need to pee when you or your partner(s) rub your prostate. Try it out and be sure to communicate with your partner(s) about how you feel.

If you don't have a prostate, anal sex can still feel really good, especially if you or your partner(s) stimulate other parts of your body at the same time!

If you feel too uncomfortable ask your partner(s) to stop, slow down or maybe try a different position that will make you feel more comfortable. But conversations like this don't have to be awkward or uncomfortable.



To douche or not to douche?

Douching is not necessary for anal sex, as there is normally only poo in the rectum (up your arse) if you need to go to the toilet. Some people feel more comfortable after douching, especially if they are going to be having rougher sex or getting fisted.

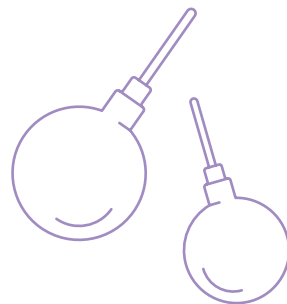
Douching can irritate the lining of your rectum (arse) and can make it easier to get infections, including HIV. If you decide to douche, it is important to only use water at body temperature. You should never use soap or any cleaning products, as this will irritate the lining of your rectum even more.

We recommend using a small bulb douche as this is easy to use and control. We do not recommend using douches that attach to a shower because it is harder to control the temperature of the water and the amount of water that goes inside you.

You can also buy over-the-counter douches from pharmacies and supermarkets that are normally used to help with constipation.

If you do use these douches before anal sex, it is important to rinse them out before filling them with water because they may contain laxatives.

It can take some time to get all the water out when you douche, so make sure you douche at least an hour before having sex, as you may need to go to the toilet a few times to get rid of all the water inside you.



Trouble 'shooting'?

People have different needs and wants when they have sex. Some people might just want a quickie, and others might want longer, more intimate sessions.

How you want to have sex can also depend on when you do it, who you do it with and how. If you having sex you really enjoy then you might cum more quickly than usual.

This can make some people worry about not pleasing their partner(s) s, and this is perfectly normal. Try talking to your partner(s) and come up with a few simple words to use if you are close to cumming, like "wait" or "hold it". This way, you can take the attention off you, and maybe use a sex toy with your partner(s) to keep them in the mood. When the sensation is over, get back to what you were doing.

Also remember that you don't need to cum to have great, exciting and fulfilling sex.

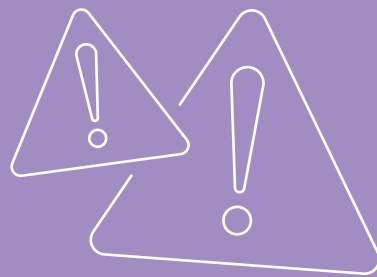
When you masturbate, you can also try going until you are close to cumming, then stopping for 30 seconds. Keep repeating this until you feel ready to cum and allow yourself to finish. By doing this a few times your body gets used to the feelings it has when you are about to cum, and means it will take a little bit longer to cum during sex.

You might be tempted to use numbing sprays or numbing lube, but if you are not using any barriers it can also pass the numbing effect onto your partner(s), which will delay their orgasm too. If you're numb and don't use enough lube, you may not feel any tears, this can lead to delayed pain and an increased risk of HIV and other STIs.

People who have an uncircumcised penis may struggle to pull back their foreskin fully when they are erect. This may be because their foreskin or their frenulum is too tight. If the foreskin is pulled too far back during sex, this can be painful, and cause tearing. Tight foreskins may be more difficult to keep clean, and dry, which can increase the likelihood of infections like thrush. If you're experiencing any pain or discomfort, we recommend talking to a medical professional about this.

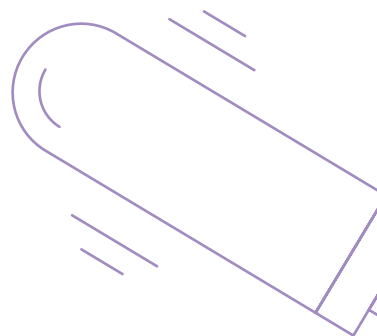
Sometimes people may struggle to get or keep an erect penis during sex. This can be because of age, medication like anti-depressants, or if someone is taking oestrogen.

There can sometimes be medical reasons why people cum too quickly, or struggle to cum. This may be harmless, but could be a symptom of another health problem. We recommend talking to your GP if you're worried.



Toy joy

Sex toys are a great way to enjoy sex, either alone or with your partner(s)!



They come in all shapes, materials, and sizes, each with their own unique uses – finding the best toy for you is all about exploring what’s around!

Power?

Some toys vibrate, thrust, or rotate, with different speeds, power levels, and patterns. You can get mains powered, rechargeable or battery powered toys, or ones which don’t have a power source at all (like dildos).

If your toy uses batteries and you’re not going to use it for a while, take the batteries out before you store it. This avoids batteries draining or leaking and ruining your toy.

What do they do?

Some sex toys can be used inside the arse to stimulate the anus and prostate (like dildos, anal beads and butt plugs) and some are made to be used outside the body and can be used to stimulate your arse hole (like small vibrators).

Using vibrating toys can feel too powerful at first – if you need to dull the vibrations you could try keeping your underwear on, or putting a towel or blanket between yourself and the vibrator to make it less strong. Similarly, if you find the vibrations are not strong enough, putting in a fresh set of batteries will often do the trick.

If you are putting a sex toy inside your arse hole, make sure it has a flared base so that it cannot get lost inside your body – this will save you from embarrassing hospital visits to get the toy out!

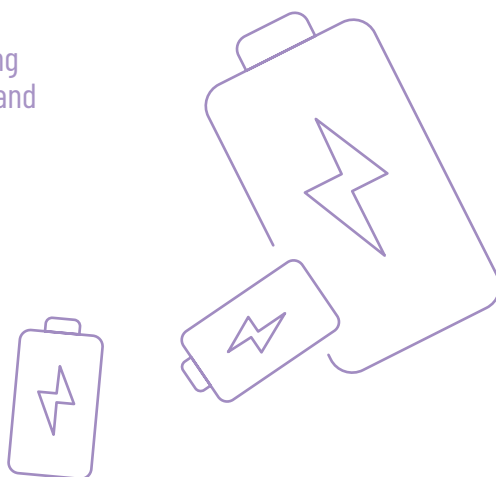
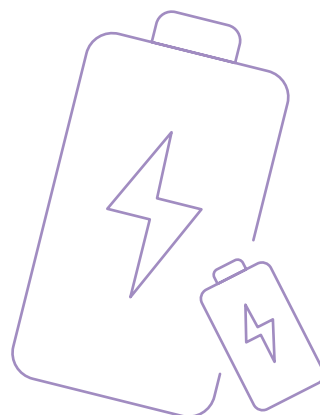
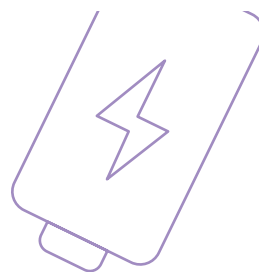
Safety & storage

When buying a sex toy, it is important to check what material it is made from because it could contain latex, which some people are allergic to. It also changes how you use and clean it.

If your sex toy is made of silicone, you should not use silicone lube with it because this will damage the sex toy and make it uncomfortable and unsafe to use.

You should always clean your sex toys before and after each use, paying special attention to areas where two materials or parts of the toy meet (like around buttons or battery compartments).

We recommend always putting a condom on a sex toy and changing the condom between partner(s), and holes, to avoid infection.



Poppers

Sometimes people will use poppers to help them bottom. Poppers can help to relax the muscles in your arse, which can make getting penetrated easier.

They do this by increasing the blood flow to your arse, which makes the muscles relax.

Because there is more blood flow, it can be easier to tear and this can increase your risk of HIV and other STIs. You can protect yourself using condoms and PrEP. Check out our sections on “Wrap it up!” and “Be PrEPared” for more information on protecting yourself from HIV and STIs.

The effects of poppers do not last long and it can make some people feel sick, faint and weak. They can also cause extreme headaches, rashes around the mouth and burn the skin if they come into contact. You should never swallow poppers as they are toxic, and don't take poppers and viagra together because the drug interaction can be fatal.



Lube it up!



Using lube is important during anal sex because the anus does not lubricate itself. If you do not use lube, it can cause the skin inside your rectum to tear, which is painful and can also increase the risk of getting HIV and STIs.

With lube, we recommend to start off with a few drops, and if you feel as though you're not lubricated enough, then gradually add more.

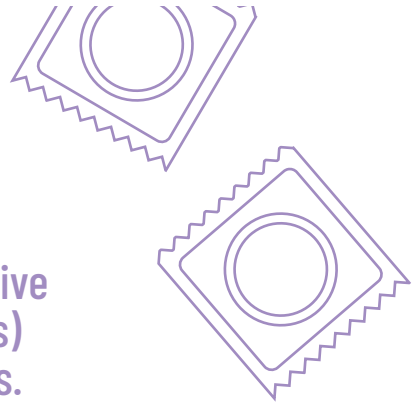
Water-based and silicone-based lube are the best for anal sex, though you cannot use silicone based lube with silicone sex toys, as this will damage the sex toy and make it uncomfortable and unsafe to use. When in doubt, we recommend that you always use water-based lube.

Do not use petroleum jelly or any other random things such as oils, butters, and moisturisers that you have lying around your bedroom as lube, as these can break the condom or harm the most sensitive parts of your skin.



Wrap it up!

Using a condom is the most effective way to stop you and your partner(s) from passing on HIV and other STIs.



Before using a condom, you need to check that it has not passed its best before date. Condom packs should have the kite mark and the CE mark to show the condoms are good quality. You should only use one condom at once, because using more than one increases the likelihood of them both breaking.

If you or your partner(s) are allergic to latex, there are many varieties of latex-free condoms. Condoms come in varying sizes, textures, and materials, so have some fun experimenting to find the right one for you!

If you are using a condom on a penis, you should hold on to the base of the condom and move away from your partner(s) before taking it off to reduce any risk of spilling bodily fluids which could cause pregnancy, HIV or STI transmission.

If you are using sex toys, it is important to use a condom, and change the condom every time the toy is used in a different hole or on a different person. This will protect you and your partner(s) from HIV and other STIs.

If you are fingering or fisting, you can use gloves or condoms on your hands or fingers to protect against STIs that are passed on through contact, like syphilis.

You could also use internal condoms (sometimes called femidoms or female condoms) for anal sex, just take the inner ring out of the condom first!

Some people also use condoms during anal sex so that if there is any poo, all you have to do is roll the condom off.

Give a dam!



If you are rimming it is important to use a dental dam.

Oral sex carries a very low HIV risk, but if you have ulcers or bleeding gums, be careful. Hepatitis A is most often caught through rimming. It is also possible to get other STIs like gonorrhoea and syphilis from rimming.

Dental dams can be made from a condom, and they can help you to stop any fluids or poo that carry transmit STIs from the anus to the mouth, such as Shigella.

You should never reuse a dental dam, and always change dental dams between holes and partner(s).

Turn a Condom in to a Dental Dam

Open & unroll the condom



Cut off the top of the condom



Cut down the side of the condom



Use the latex rectangle for protection during oral sex



Be PrEPared!



PrEP is a pill that can prevent you from getting HIV. You can either take it daily, or you can take it before, during, and after sex (sometimes called event-based dosing).

How you take it depends on the sex you will be having and on which works best for you.

Event-based dosing works well if you are having anal sex, or if you are the penetrative partner(s) in vaginal sex, but it does not work if you are the receptive partner(s) in vaginal sex. This is because it takes at least 7 days for PrEP levels to build up in vaginal tissue.

Daily dosing works best if you take it the same time every day, so it helps to make it part of your routine. Leave it next to your toothbrush and toothpaste so you remember to take it every morning, or next to your bed so you take it when you wake up.

It is important to remember that PrEP only protects you against HIV, not other STIs. Condoms and regular testing are the best ways to protect yourself from other STIs, such as chlamydia or gonorrhoea.

You don't need to take PrEP forever; if you decide to stop having sex and you're not at risk of getting HIV any more, you can stop taking it.



PrEP is great for people who worry a lot about HIV, even when they use a condom and want a bit more peace of mind. It can also be good for people who are allergic to latex, or struggle to find the right fit with condoms, although there are now more ways to find the right condom for you. Finally, it is also good for people who don't like the feeling of condoms and prefer the feeling of skin-to-skin contact.

PrEP can have some side effects. It can interact with your kidneys, and make them not work as well as they should. If you are on PrEP you need to speak to your doctor about getting a kidney function test every three months. If the test shows your kidney function has been affected, you may need to come off of PrEP for a while to allow your kidneys to return to normal, and then you can start taking it again.

PrEP does not interact with any hormonal treatment or contraceptive, though it can interact with some other medications, so it is worth speaking to your GP if you are on other medication and worried about interaction.

PrEP is not currently available on the NHS in England and Northern Ireland but it is in Wales and Scotland, subject to you meeting certain criteria which will vary by country. It can also be bought legally online, though it is important to make sure you are using a website you can trust such as:

www.iwantprepnw.co.uk



PEP, PEP!

PEP is a strong combination of HIV medicines which can help stop you getting HIV after potentially being exposed to it.

You can get PEP from a Sexual Health Clinic if it is open, and from A&E at any time. When you arrive at the Sexual Health Clinic or A&E, you should explain that you think you have been exposed to HIV and would like to take PEP.

PEP is a 28 day course of medication, and you need to start taking it within 72 hours of unprotected sex. It will be more effective the quicker you take it, with some guidelines recommending that you start within 24 or 48 hours.

PEP is available for free on the NHS, but it is very expensive, so it is only given to people if they think the risk is great enough. You will be asked about the HIV status of the person you have had sex with and the kinds of sex that you had.

The chance of you being given PrEP changes depending on your answers to these questions, and details around the risk incident, so it is important you are honest with them about what happened.



FAQs

“I’m worried about gas building up in my arse”

“It is normal to be worried about gas build up, and farting when you have sex. Sometimes your partner(s) can push air up your arse if they pull out fully and push back in, which pushes air in front of the finger, fist, penis or sex toy, so if you are anxious about farting, try to avoid fully pulling out.”

“How do I know if I can trust my new partner(s)?”

“It is normal to be nervous around a new partner(s) and this can make it harder to trust them. If they are new in your life, you are still getting to know each other, and figuring out what you like to do during sex. It could be a good idea to dirty talk a little over the phone, or to meet in public and talk for a little before sex, so you know more about them and what they are like as a person. Communication is key to building trust!”



“How safe is it to engage in bareback sex on PrEP?”

“PrEP does work and there have been many trials that show it protects people from HIV. As long as you take it properly, it is more than 99% effective at protecting you from HIV. How you dose PrEP can depend on the kinds of sex you have.” Find out more information on page 23 in our “Be PrEPared!” section!





"I've heard anal sex can make you prolapse, is that true?"

"Prolapsing is where your rectum or parts sticks out from your arse hole to form a lump. It can be caused by constipation, diarrhoea and excessive pressure, like you might experience during pregnancy, but there is no evidence to show prolapsing can be caused by sex. It is possible that you could damage your rectum by having vigorous sex, sex without lube or by continuing to have sex if it hurts and you have tightened up. This can put pressure on your rectum, and could potentially cause a prolapse. If you do have a prolapse, it is important to talk to your GP to get the right advice. Do not just push it back in, as it might not go back where it should be, and it could cause a blockage."

"Is anal sex as enjoyable as it seems?"

"There is no pressure on you to try anal sex if you are worried about enjoying it or not, you should only do it because you want to. If you are worried about enjoying it, just remember to take it slow, and remember that everybody is a little bit different, and what you have seen or heard that one person likes, might not be what you enjoy at all. It can help to start off by masturbating on your own, and try putting fingers or a sex toy up your arse and seeing how it feels. If you like it, keep going! If you don't you can stop and try again."



WE EMPOWER LGBTQ+ PEOPLE TO REALISE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL, EVERY DAY.

All LGBTQ+ people deserve to
have fulfilling sex lives and
intimate relationships without
fear or shame.

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