



Safer Sex 3.0 – Protect yourself from HIV infection



- Condoms
- Effective medication-based treatments
- Pre-exposure prophylaxis



Safer SEX 3.0 – Protecting yourself from HIV Up-to-date advice on prevention

Answering questions relating to sexuality and sexual health in a way that is open and unbiased is one of the main objectives of the “Brandenburg Initiative – Together against AIDS”. The initiative aims to empower people to protect themselves from infection, but more importantly, also to experience their individual sexuality with complete autonomy. Generally when we talk about ‘Safer Sex’, we look at protective measures we can put in place which find the right balance between our impulses of pleasure/desire in their various forms and reducing the risks to our health.

Since summer 2018, the “Safer Sex 3.0” concept has been communicated across Germany by the German AIDS Association. There are 3 options available for protecting ourselves from HIV transmission:

- Using a condom;
- Protection using a highly-effective medication;
- Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP). These are scientifically-proven methods that have been confirmed in studies around the globe.

Only around 13 percent of the German population is aware of the Safer Sex 3.0 initiative. The objective of these campaigns is to raise awareness and inform people about new developments in the science in order to:

- counteract ungrounded fears about transmission;
- prevent discrimination and stigmatisation;
- and offer support to sufferers of HIV and their partners.

Why Safer Sex 3.0?

Previously the main method of protection against HIV infection that was communicated to the general population was the use of condoms. In the past few years, studies have demonstrated that other options are available for protecting ourselves from infection with HIV: highly-effective medications, and PrEP.

All three of these Safer Sex methods, i.e. condoms, medications, and PrEP, provide reliable protection against HIV infection when used properly.



Condoms

Condoms are probably the Safer Sex method that people are most familiar with. Condoms also reduce the risk of infection with other sexually-transmitted diseases. Condoms can also provide protection against an unwanted pregnancy.

Protection using medications

This method involves the HIV-positive partner regularly taking medication which prevents the replication of the HIV virus. As a result, the virus will no longer be detectable in their blood. After a 6-month period with undetectable blood levels, there will also be hardly any virus left in the other bodily fluids, such as sperm and vaginal fluids. If the treatment is successful, HIV-positive partners will no longer be infectious. In this case, the virus cannot be transmitted to the HIV-negative partner during sex.

PrEP

PrEP is the abbreviation for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, which means protection from a risk of infection. This protective method involves the HIV-negative partner taking a HIV-medication, either daily or, in certain cases, just before any sexual contact. This will protect them from becoming infected with HIV.

Gonorrhoea, syphilis & chlamydia

There are other sexually-transmitted diseases, besides HIV, such as gonorrhoea, syphilis and chlamydia. There is no method available for absolute protection against these infections. Even condoms can only reduce the risk of infection. That's why sexually-active people who have different sexual partners should also get tested each year to check for sexually-transmitted diseases.

Getting tested

If you have different sexual partners, getting a HIV test every year should be seen as an integral part of your sex life. There are centres where you can get tested across all of Germany: at the local health authorities, through regional AIDS charities, and their associated doctors.

You can look at the map to find your closest test centre. Local health authorities and AIDS charities offer anonymous testing which is generally offered free of charge.



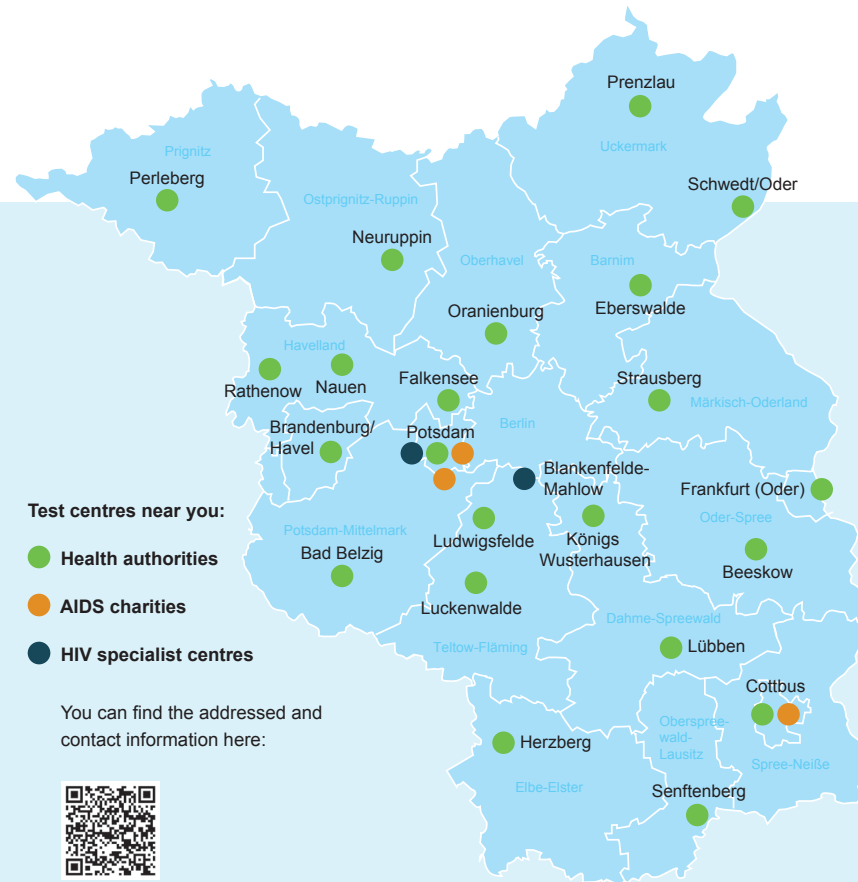


HIV diagnosis and treatment in Germany

There are approx. 86,000 HIV-positive people living in Germany.

Of these:

- 65,500 are receiving treatment, with a viral load at undetectable levels.
- 3,300 are receiving treatment, with a detectable viral load.
- 6,000 are not yet receiving treatment.
- 10,600 are unaware that they are infected with HIV.



Herausgeber

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HIV diagnosis and treatment in Brandenburg and Berlin

There are approx. 15,400 HIV-positive people living in Berlin and Brandenburg.

Of these:

- 12,200 are receiving treatment, with a viral load at undetectable levels.
- 600 are receiving treatment, with a detectable viral load.
- 800 are not yet receiving treatment.
- 1,800 are unaware that they are infected with HIV.

Source: Epidemiological Bulletin RKI 46/2019

