

Safer Sex

a guide for males who have sex with males

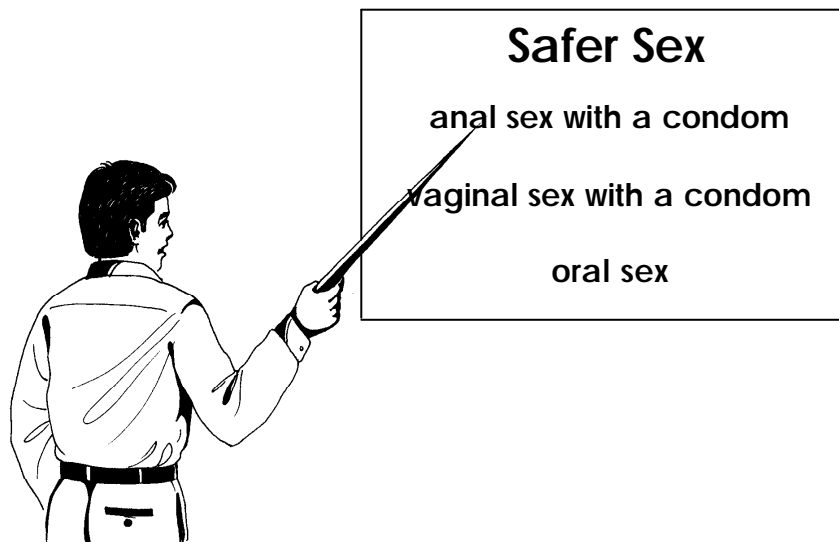
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Risk Issues:

AIDS educators frequently divide all sexual activities into following three categories:

- **Safe Sex – No Risk** : Where no possibility of exchange of semen, vaginal fluids or blood. Touching, hugging, kissing (include deep or French kissing), masturbation (alone or with partner), body rubbing, licking the body, thigh sex etc. are the sexual activities fall into this category.
- **Safer sex – Low Risk** : Where most likely there would be a small possibility of an exchange of semen, vaginal fluids, or blood; e.g. oral sex, anal sex with a condom or vaginal sex with a condom.
- **Unsafe sex – High Risk**: Where there is certain exchange of semen, vaginal fluids, or blood. It includes sexual activities like anal or vaginal sex without a condom, sharing of unclean syringes, sharing of objects for penetrative sex and any activity that allows blood-to-blood contact.

Remember, HIV has to get into the blood stream to cause any infection. Safer sex is about reducing the risks of infection from HIV/STI.



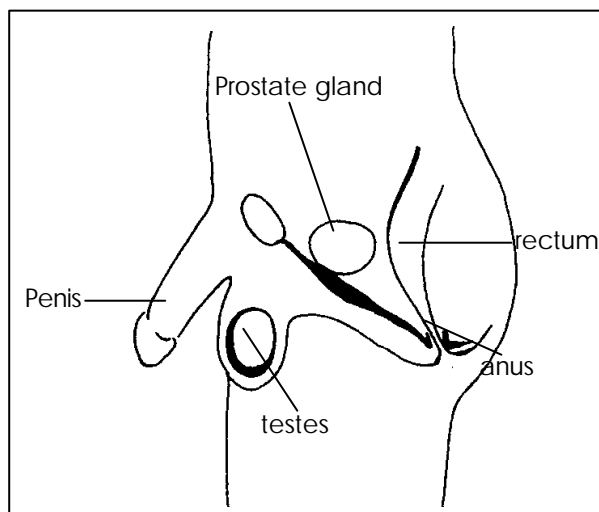
Anal Sex:

Unlike the vagina the anus/rectum is not naturally lubricated. Also, because it has no elasticity like the vagina, any kind of penetration causes tiny cuts inside it. This makes easier to pass any infection through blood stream.

The proper use of a condom with plenty of water-base lubrication, such as KY Jelly can reduce the risk of HIV and STI infection. Water-base lubricants will also reduce pain substantially and possibilities of cuts inside the anus/rectum. However, condoms can also break if used incorrectly.

Do not use any oil, butter, ghee, cream or any oil-base lubricants because these will damage condom.

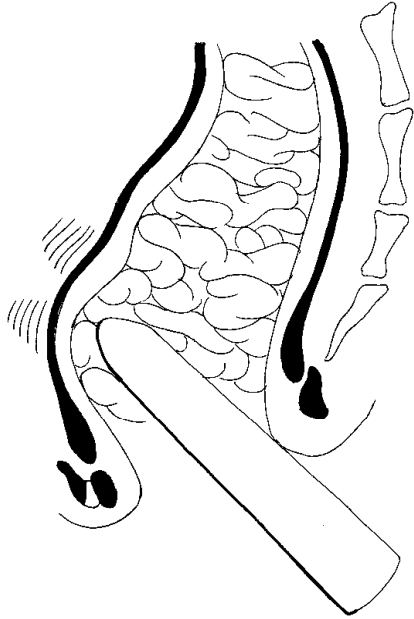
Remember, condoms provide good protection against infection of STIs and HIV, it is not 100% safe. The quality of condoms may vary as well as knowledge for effective use.



Prostate gland

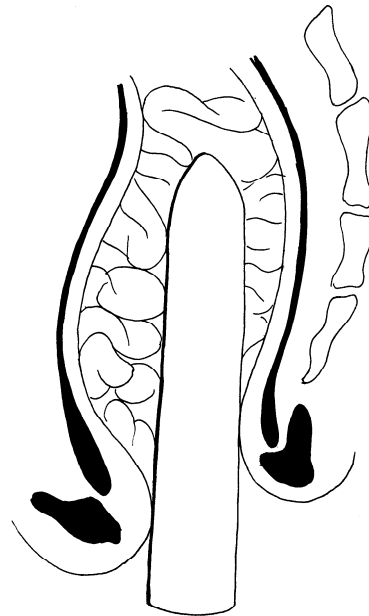
For males, the prostate gland lies next to the rectum wall. Stimulation of the prostate gland through the insertion of a penis or a finger into the anus/rectum can create an especially pleasurable and highly erotic feeling for some males.

Rectum is curved. Any object inserted into the rectum incorrectly can cause pain and, if force is used, possible tearing and damage inside the anus/rectum. Make sure to use an appropriate position which is less painful for the receptive partner.



at wrong angle, an object runs into the rectal wall resulting in pain or, if force is used, possible tearing and tissue damage.

at rights angle, an object enters the rectum smoothly and comfortably

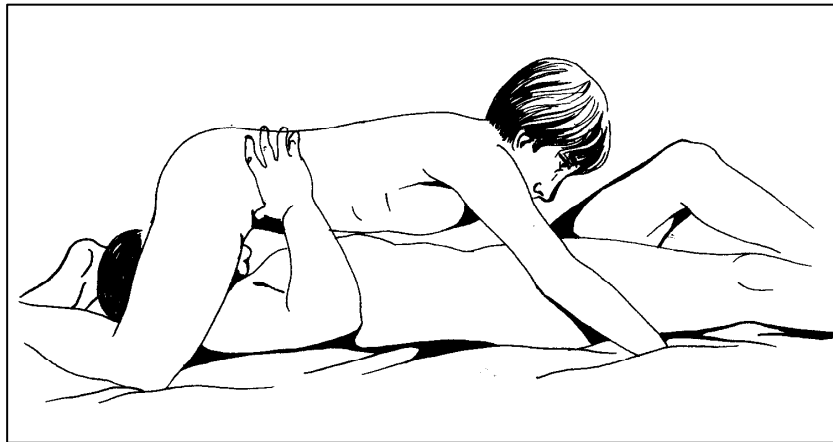


Oral Sex:

Oral sex is seen as a safer sex behaviour. Current evidence indicates, there is a little risk of transmission of HIV for the receptive partner. However, risk can be further reduced if the receptive partner does not have bleeding gums or open sores in the mouth and/or throat.

Remember, chewing paan, tobacco, beetle-nut, paan masala etc. can cause open sores or tiny cuts inside the mouth. It is also advisable to not brushing teeth before receptive oral sex because it can cause bleeding gums.

The risk of HIV/STDs infection for the receptive partner increases if he allows his partner to ejaculate in his mouth and swallow semen. However, the risk still a quite low. Use of condoms can further clearly reduce the already low but possible risk of HIV/STD infection during oral sex. If receptive partner have an STI there are possibilities to pass the infection to the penetrative partner during oral sex.

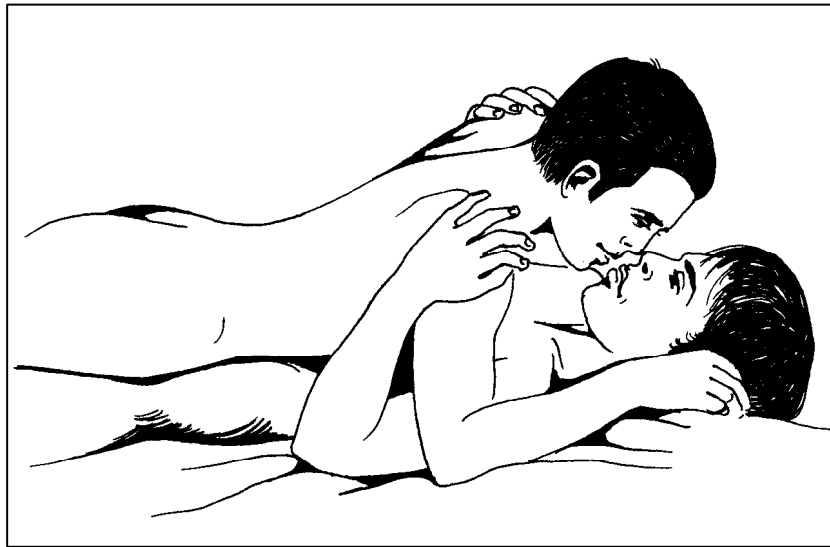


Others sexual activitites:

There are a range of sexual activities apart from penetrative anal or oral sex which is often performed by MSM. These include mutual masturbation, thigh sex, licking the body, body rubbing, rimming, kissing and deep kissing etc.

Most of these are safe as long as there is no exchange of blood and/or semen between the partners. For example kissing and deep kissing is safe unless the kiss is very dry and draws blood, or either partner has open sores or infection in mouth.

If you are **licking the body** of partner be sure he does not have any open sores or cuts on his body. Avoid any contact between tongue and cuts/open sores.



Thigh sex is inserting the penis in between the thighs of the partner. It is a safe sex behaviour. For thigh-sex both partners should not have any infection or open sores in genital and/or anal area and between the thighs

Rimming is licking the partner's anus. It is considered to present a little chance of transmitting HIV. However, rimming can transmit hepatitis and many other bacterial infections. Cleaning the anus before and using a barrier (dental dam – a small square of latex) during rimming can reduce the risk almost nil. If you cannot find a dental dam from medical shop roll open a condom and cut it between it's length with a scissor.

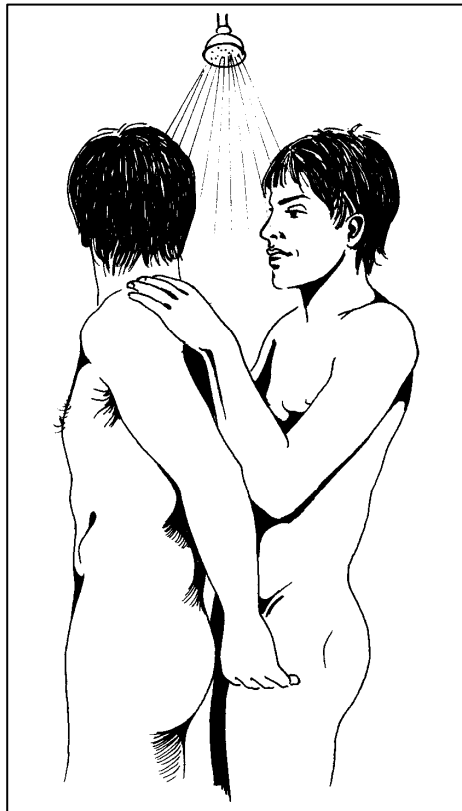


Masturbation (self or between two or more partners) is a safe sex behaviour.

Sexual hygiene:

Unclean anal and genital area are more prone to catch any infection. If a person already has an STD his risk of catching HIV is much more higher. In the heat and humidity of our country where the dust and pollution are common it is necessary to be extra careful about it.

Wash your genital and anal area daily, using clean water and soap. It is also a good idea if you regularly (once or twice in a month) trim or shave your pubic hair. It reduce the risk of fungal infection which is quite common among Indian males. Fungal infection causes itching and possible sores around the genital area.



Take a Shower or bath together before sex. It is hygienic as well as can be highly erotic.

If you are uncircumcised a white paste often forms under your foreskin. It is called *smegma*. It consist of dead skin cells, oily secretion of foreskin, precum, dirt particles, sweat and bacteria. If allowed to build up, it can irritate the tip of your penis and give off bad smell. It also can increases the risk of HIV/STDs infection. If you are uncircumcised it is advised that you wash your penis under the foreskin regularly, particularly before sex.

Before anal sex it is best to wash your anus. This reduces risks of transmission of bacterial infection.



Circumcised and uncircumcised penis

Good oral hygiene is also important. Bleeding gums, sores etc. can increase risks of transmission in terms of oral sex. Regular brushing with clean water and antiseptic mouth wash and dental check-ups need to be done. Remember, do not brush before doing oral sex.

If possible then check the genital and anal area of your partner before sex. Make it a sexual experience rather than a medical examination. Massage and kiss him while you look. Or have a bath together and while you're washing him check him out.

