

## What is HIV?

HIV is a virus that attacks the body's immune system.

Your immune system protects you against disease. If it is damaged, you get sick.

An HIV infection is a slow progression. You may feel healthy for several years. But an untreated HIV infection leads to AIDS.

AIDS is a deadly disease. When a person with HIV develops AIDS, their immune system is severely weakened.

This can lead to life-threatening infections and diseases.

HIV is spread through sexual contact and infected blood. Condoms are the best way to protect yourself from HIV.

## How is HIV detected

Symptoms are signs of disease. The symptoms of HIV are similar to those of a common infection.

Some people experience a brief period of mild fever, sore throat, swollen lymph glands and rash a few weeks after being infected. Others have no symptoms at all and have no signs of the infection for several years.

It is possible to have an HIV infection and infect others without ever knowing you have it. The only way to know for sure is to get tested!

Do you think you might be infected? Get tested. An HIV test is free and gives you a definitive answer!

## Confidentiality

In Sweden, everyone who works in healthcare is subject to confidentiality. This means that no one is entitled to tell anyone about you, your condition or your treatment. Confidentiality also applies to interpreters and translators.

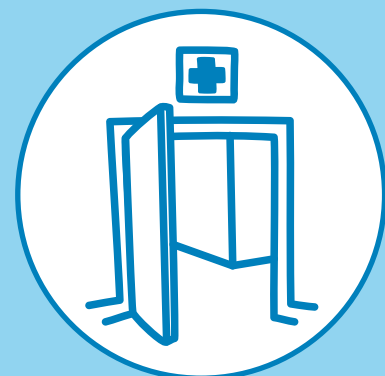
## Anonymity

You have the right to remain anonymous when you take an HIV test. This means that you do not have to give your name or show your patient badge. If you do have an HIV infection, the doctor will create a chart for you and request your personal information.

## Where to go

You can get tested at:

- ▶ Health centres.
- ▶ Youth health centres.
- ▶ Infection, dermatology and STD surgeries at hospitals.
- ▶ Gynaecological surgeries.
- ▶ The Flyktinghälsan healthcare centre in Malmö.



## HIV testing is crucial!

Taking an HIV test is free and gives you a clear answer.

Care and treatment do not cost anything.

You can be anonymous.

Condoms are the best way to protect yourself against HIV.

## Anyone can get HIV

Men and women, young and old.

Anyone can be infected by HIV and the virus is found all around the world.

In Sweden everyone can get tested and anti-retroviral medicines and medical treatment are free.

## How are HIV and AIDS treated in Sweden?

HIV cannot be cured. But there are anti-retroviral drugs that can enhance your immune system and slow the infection. In Sweden such drugs are free.

## Protect yourself!

A condom is the best way to protect yourself against HIV. Condoms also protect against other sexually transmitted diseases. The condom must be whole and must be used through the entire sex act!



## The Communicable Diseases Act (Smittskyddslagen)

Sweden has a law to reduce the spread of infectious diseases, the Communicable Diseases Act. According to this law, you must seek medical attention if you think you are infected with HIV. You must also take the tests and give the samples the doctor wants.

This is vital to prevent the spread of HIV.

If you have HIV, you must tell your sexual partner. It is your responsibility not to infect others.

## You cannot be infected by:

- Skin contact, hugs, caresses or touching.
- Sharing kitchen equipment, food or drink.
- Sharing a sauna or swimming in the same pool.
- Using the same toilet or bathroom.

## How is HIV spread?

- Unprotected sex.
- Direct contact with infected blood.
- Sharing injection needles.
- From mother to child during birth or nursing.

## Living with HIV

A person with HIV can be healthy for many years. In many ways you can continue to live as usual and even have sexual relations. However, it is important to use a condom and to tell your partner that you have HIV. Anti-retroviral medicines are free in Sweden.

*HIV IS A  
VIRUS THAT  
YOU NEVER  
GET RID OF*

## Take an HIV test to be sure

- A doctor takes a simple blood sample.
- The results come back in about a week.
- Getting an HIV test is free in Sweden.
- It doesn't cost anything to get care and treatment if you have HIV.



## Where to turn for information, advice and support

Many facilities can provide information and answer your questions. Everyone who works in healthcare is bound to confidentiality and you have the right to remain anonymous.

**1177** – Healthcare hotline  
direct number 1177 | [www.1177.se](http://www.1177.se)

This hotline and website provide 24-hour information if you or a loved one falls ill. You speak to an experienced nurse. You can be anonymous. You can dial 1177 from anywhere in the country. For life-threatening emergencies, ring 112.

### **Flyktinghälsan in Malmö**

040-623 97 00

[www.skane.se/vardcentralenflyktinghalsan](http://www.skane.se/vardcentralenflyktinghalsan)

The Flyktinghälsan health centre offers medical examinations for asylum seekers and close-relative immigrants, and medical care to asylum seekers. Everyone who seeks care here is offered an interpreter.

### **Primary care – health centres and youth health centres in Skåne**

[www.skane.se/primarvarden](http://www.skane.se/primarvarden)

Primary care is a collective name for all healthcare facilities in Skåne. This site lists all the addresses, telephone numbers and URLs to health centres for adults and young people.

### **Centrum för sexuell hälsa (Sexual Health Centre) in Malmö**

040-33 17 47

[www.sexuellhalsa.umas.se](http://www.sexuellhalsa.umas.se)

The centre offers counsel, testing and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases. They also have midwives who provide advice on birth control. The centre receives patients from all of Skåne.

### **Youth health centres**

[www.umo.se](http://www.umo.se)

[www.skane.se/ungdomsmottagningen](http://www.skane.se/ungdomsmottagningen)

Youth health centres are for people aged 12–23 in their municipality. They provide counsel, testing and treatment of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

## **Volunteer organisations that work with HIV prevention in Skåne**

### **Noaks ark**

040-611 52 15/042-24 31 00

[www.noaksark.org/skane](http://www.noaksark.org/skane)

### **Positiva Gruppen Syd**

040-791 61 | [www.pgsgyd.nu](http://www.pgsgyd.nu)

### **Projekt HBTre**

042-28 13 99 | [www.hbtre.se](http://www.hbtre.se)

### **RFSL Rådgivningen Skåne**

040-611 99 51 | [www.rfslradgivningen.se](http://www.rfslradgivningen.se)

### **RFSL Kristianstad**

044-10 65 90 | [www.rfsl.se/kristianstad](http://www.rfsl.se/kristianstad)

### **RFSU**

040-30 57 00

[www.rfsu.se/malmo](http://www.rfsu.se/malmo)

### **Studieförbundet**

046-211 77 50

[www.studieforamjandet.se/mittskane](http://www.studieforamjandet.se/mittskane)

### **Internationella kvinnoföreningen**

040-79 474

[www.ikf.se](http://www.ikf.se)

### **Projekt sex P6**

046-13 63 63

[www.projekt6.se](http://www.projekt6.se)

### **U-n-I You and I**

[www.karen.mah.se/uni](http://www.karen.mah.se/uni)

