

H.A.L.O

Health Adviser's Latest Offering

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NHS TAYSIDE SEXUAL HEALTH ADVISER'S
NEWSLETTER



Do I need an STI test?

It's up to you whether to have a test for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or not but it could save you a lot of worry.

Here are some good reasons you should get a test:

You have symptoms (such as pain or discomfort when passing urine, bleeding after sex, lower tummy pain, or discharge)

A condom burst or came off during sex

You have had sex with a person who has an STI (you are a contact of infection - maybe an ex partner has advised you of this)

We have contacted you and advised that you have been named as a contact of someone with an STI

Change of partner (ending of a relationship and starting a new one)

Thinking of having a family (STIs in pregnancy can be very serious)

If you are in a stable, long term relationship and you don't want to continue using condoms. You should both consider testing before stopping condom use.



Getting tested for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) - when we need to - is the responsible, adult thing to do.

For information about testing, please give us a call or check out the Q & A section on page 2 of this edition of HALO.

Health Advisers:

Dundee: 01382 632 600

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New 'Standards for HIV Services' in Scotland now published

July 18th 2011 saw NHS Scotland - Healthcare Improvement Scotland (NHSS HIS) publish the much anticipated "Standards for HIV Services".

Back in January 2010 a project group was convened to develop standards for HIV services. The standards would be evidence based, relevant, and would address gaps in service provision across Scotland. The project group was drawn from a wide range of disciplines including health, social services, local authorities, specialist statutory and non-statutory services.

The involvement of voluntary sector organisations, patients, carers and the public was of fundamental importance from the outset.

The final standards cover areas such as:

- Prevention
- Diagnosis
- Treatment and care
- Service planning and staff training

Visit the HIS website to read the complete document (see panel to right).



Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) was launched on 1 April 2011. This health body was created by the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 and marks a change in the way the quality of healthcare across Scotland will be supported nationally.

HIS has key responsibility to help NHS Scotland and independent healthcare providers to:

- deliver high quality, evidence-based, safe, effective and person-centred care, and
- scrutinise services to provide public assurance about the quality and safety of that care.

www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org

HIV Scotland launch updated website

HIV Scotland launched a new, and updated, version of their website, still at the same address -

HIV Scotland is the national HIV policy charity for Scotland.

Their goals include:

A society which is well-informed about HIV with excellent prevention and

treatment services.

And to provide expertise to inform and deliver strong policies.

www.hivscotland.com



Q & A

1. When I come to the sexual health clinic how do you test for STIs (Sexually Transmitted Infections)?

In most cases we would test for Chlamydia (the most common STI in Scotland), Gonorrhoea, HIV and Syphilis.

The Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea test will be a specimen of urine (for males) and a self-taken swab (in females). The tests are painless and take only a few minutes.

We will offer blood testing to all patients for HIV and Syphilis.

Sometimes we may take other swabs (throat, rectal or vaginal swabs) and we may need to examine you.

The type of test will depend on your risks, your sexual practices, and whether you have symptoms or not.



2. What type of condom is best?

There is a vast array of condoms available, from various sizes and shapes, to flavoured ones, stronger ones, to condoms that even glow in the dark!

All condoms sold in the UK should carry either a British Kite Mark or EU safety logo (or both).



Providing this is the case,

the condom should be perfectly safe, having been tested to rigorous safety and quality checks.

Don't use 'novelty' condoms!

Check the 'best before' or expiry date on the wrapper. Only use if it is in date and the wrapper is intact.

Only use a condom once.

All condoms provided by NHS Tayside Sexual and Reproductive Health Services are FREE of charge.

For more information on condom use and choice, ask one of the Health Advisers at our clinics.



MSM Survey Update...

You may recall our "MSM Survey" article in issue 1 in which we asked men who have sex with men (MSM) to take part in an online survey.

This survey was designed to give services a better understanding of the needs of MSM (in NHS Tayside) with regard to the future provision and shape of sexual health services across the region.

The online survey has now closed and the data is being put together. Focus groups are now planned and the full report should be available in the latter part of the year.

We will keep you updated on progress.

P.E.P. Reminder...

If you are exposed to HIV (through sexual contact), remember that you may be eligible for Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), a four week course of anti HIV medicines. Visit the PEP website for more information or call our clinic.



www.pepscotland.com