



As prostitutes, we're aware of the risks involved with the business. One is that we may be exposed to HIV, the AIDS virus.

One of the concerns of prostitutes is whether or not to take the AIDS test. Here are some things you need to know if you're thinking of taking it.

WHY TEST?

You may be thinking about taking the test because:

You want to have a baby, or your going to have a baby.

You can give your baby AIDS, but even if you have HIV you still can have a healthy baby.

You're sick and you think you might have AIDS.

You've done some risky things.

Take a look at the next section to see if you are at risk for AIDS.

RISKS?

These are the easiest ways to get AIDS. Have you:

Fucked or sucked with no condom for MONEY?

Fucked or sucked with no condom for FUN?

Fucked or sucked with no condom for LOVE?

You or your lover may have HIV or AIDS and not know it.

Shared a needle without cleaning it with bleach and rinsing with water first?

Fucked or sucked with no condom with anyone who has shot up with used needles?

Been into scenes where there's blood involved?

This includes S/M; and body-piercing and tattooing done without cleaning the needle with bleach and water first.

THE TEST

Now there are some things you should know about the test:

The test doesn't test for AIDS. It is a blood test that finds out if you have HIV, by looking for anti-bodies, the weapons your body produces to fight diseases like the flu.

Anybody can get tested for free. An **ANONYMOUS TEST** means no information about you will be kept with the test, and no one but you will know the results. Look to the end of this pamphlet for places to go in Toronto for anonymous tests.

A **CONFIDENTIAL TEST** means that your doctor will report your name to the government if you have a positive test.

It is better that only the people you want to tell know the result. Judges have given longer and harder sentences to prostitutes who have HIV, and prisons have kept us in longer.

Most prostitutes get tested by their doctors. Ask you doctor to do an **ANONYMOUS TEST**, or go to one of the clinics at the end of this pamphlet.

At clinics, like everywhere else, you'll get hassled about being a prostitute. Think twice about telling them you work.

TEST RESULTS

If you take the test and it comes back **NEGATIVE** it means that they haven't found the HIV antibodies. If it is **POSITIVE**, you'll have another test right away in case the first was wrong. If it's positive again, then you have HIV.

NEGATIVE?

If you have tested negative, you should have a second test in six months, in case it was wrong.

Testing negative doesn't mean you don't have to think about it any more. It means you've been careful, now you can make sure you **KEEP** being careful!

POSITIVE?

If you have HIV you can pass it on, even if you're not sick. You can still have sex for fun **and** for profit. But think about making some changes in your life:

You. It's time to REALLY start looking after your health.

Cut down or cut out excess smoking, drinking, drugs etc., because these make it easier for you to get sick. If you have an addiction that you want to beat - now's the time to get help, because it's hard for addicts with AIDS to get treatment.

If you have AIDS, you have a right to benefits, same as if you have a baby. You should go to the top of the list for housing

etc. You'll probably have to fight for your rights.

Working.

It's not easy to be a prostitute who has HIV, especially if you have to keep working. Other people in the business will trash you for being sick, and the cops and the courts will give you an even harder time than usual. Social services won't want you to work, but won't help you stop.

Sex. Make it safe -- all the time, with everyone.

Always use condoms for fucking and sucking. Remember, even the person fucking or getting sucked is at risk. Always, always, always use condoms with tricks.

Illness. Take it seriously.

If you have AIDS or HIV, you can get really sick from diseases that you would normally get over fast, like the flu. The more tricks you turn, the more germs you may get.

When you get a bug, you should take it seriously. Take time off from the street or the phone, and rest until you are better. You should see a doctor who **KNOWS** what's what with HIV and AIDS. The people at PSSP and Maggie's can tell you about a good doctor who will who will take you seriously.

Talking. Who to tell.

Be careful who you tell. People will give you a hard time if you're a prostitute who

has HIV. Tell close friends and lovers if you can, because you'll need their help through this. You can tell the prostitutes who work at Maggie's and PSSP because we **WON'T** tell ANYONE else. We don't keep files on the people we meet.

You're not the only one.

There are a lot of people who have HIV or AIDS and know what you're going through. See the end of this pamphlet for groups that can give you treatment information and help you get your rights. Find out about new treatments, and work to change people's attitudes about people with AIDS.

RESOURCES

Maggie's / Prostitutes' Safe Sex Project

298 Gerrard Street East at Parliament
Toronto, Ontario
(416) 964-0150

Coffee House Hours:

Tues & Wed nights from 10 pm 'til 2 am

ANONYMOUS TEST CENTRES

Hassle Free Clinic
556 Church at Wellesley
(416) 922-0566/922-0603

Birth Control & VD Clinic
2828 Bathurst at Glencairn
(416) 789-4541

RIGHTS

AIDS Action Now!
(416) 928-2206

TREATMENT INFO

Community AIDS Treatment
Information Exchange
Write: 517 College St #324
Toronto, ON M6G 1A8
(416) 944-1916

NEEDLE EXCHANGE

The Works
660 Dundas West
east of Bathurst
(416) 392-0520

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