

LGBTQ+ sexual health



what is LGBTQ+?

LGBTQ+ refers to people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning. There are other identities and communities that may fall into this umbrella term as well, like pansexual, genderfluid and many others. LGBTQ+ identities are about sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

People who identify as LGBTQ+ have many of the same sexual health concerns as their cisgender/heterosexual peers. These include avoiding STIs and unintended pregnancy.

top 3 things you should know about LGBTQ+ sexual health

- People who identify as LGBTQ+ need sexual health care.
- Many people who identify as LGBTQ+ need to think about preventing pregnancy, and all need to think about preventing sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- You deserve to have a doctor or nurse that is LGBTQ+ friendly.

sexual health care if you're lgbtq+

Talk to your doctor or nurse about:

- When to get a checkup
- Getting vaccines for hepatitis A/B and HPV
- Screenings for breast, cervical, prostate, and testicular cancers
- Testing for STIs if you have oral, vaginal or anal sex
- Birth control if you're having penis-in-vagina sex that puts you, or your partner, at risk of unintended pregnancy
- Concerns about sexual function or satisfaction
- Gender-affirming treatments or surgeries
- Fertility and parenting options

pregnancy prevention

If there is a chance you might have sex that can cause pregnancy, and you don't want to be pregnant right now, use birth control. There are many options to choose from. The most convenient and effective methods are the IUD and implant. Your doctor or nurse, like the staff at your local Planned Parenthood health center, can help you find the best method for you.

talking to your doctor or nurse

Talking with your doctor or nurse about your sex life can feel awkward, especially if you're worried about homophobia, biphobia, or transphobia. But it's important to be as honest as you can. The more honest you are about your identity and sex life, the better care they can give you.

Here are some tips to make the conversation easier.

- **Prepare to answer personal questions.** You may get asked about what kinds of sex you have, with how many people, and whether or not you use protection. This helps your doctor or nurse figure out what tests/care you may need.
- **Write down and bring a list of questions.** Doctor appointments can be overwhelming! It's easy to forget what you wanted to talk about. Having a list with you can help.
- **Start the visit with your questions.** Don't wait until the end. Let them know that you have some things you'd like to talk about.
- **If you're a trans man, you may still be able to get pregnant, even if you're taking testosterone.** Ask about birth control options if you have a vagina and are having sex with people who make sperm.
- **If you're a trans woman who takes hormones, you may still have enough sperm to cause pregnancy.** Talk with your doctor or nurse about birth control options if you want to prevent pregnancy.

safer sex

STIs are passed from one person to another during sexual activity. Most STIs are carried in semen (cum), vaginal fluids, and/or blood. This means they can be passed by vaginal, anal, or oral sex, or sharing needles. Some STIs can also be passed by genital skin-to-skin touching. Anyone can get an STI.

The only way to be sure you won't get an STI is to never have sexual contact with anyone (abstinence). If you're having sex, here are ways to make it safer:

- **Use a barrier every time you have oral, anal, or vaginal sex.** Barriers include inside or outside condoms and dental dams. They cover most of the genitals and protect you and your partner from bodily fluids.
- **Get tested for STIs including HIV, even if you always use barriers and feel fine.** Most people with STIs don't have symptoms and don't know they have one.
- **Stick to sexual activities that don't spread STIs.** These include any activities where you keep your clothes on or don't touch each other (like masturbating with each other).

If you have an STI, you can lower your chances of passing it to your partner. Some STIs can be cured with medicine. For those that can't, treatment can help with symptoms, and help you avoid passing the STI to your partner.

Finding a doctor or nurse you trust and feel comfortable talking to is important. They should listen to your concerns and take the time to explain things clearly.

Ways to find an LGBTQ+-friendly provider:

- Visit a Planned Parenthood Health Center.
- Ask LGBTQ+ family members or friends for a recommendation.
- Search Gay and Lesbian Medical Association's (GLMA) Provider Directory at glma.org.

center locations

Cincinnati Surgical Center

513.287.6488
2314 Auburn Avenue | Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

Dayton Health Center

937.226.0780
224 N. Wilkinson Street | Dayton, Ohio 45402

Hamilton Health Center

513.856.8332
11 Ludlow Street | Hamilton, Ohio 45011

Mt. Auburn Health Center

513.287.6484
2314 Auburn Avenue | Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

Springfield Health Center

937.325.7349
1061 North Bechtle Avenue | Springfield, Ohio 45504

www.ppswo.org

Find us on   

Planned Parenthood® is a registered trademark of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc.

Rev 6/20

Call **1.800.230.PLAN** or visit **ppswo.org** to learn more or to find the Planned Parenthood Health Center nearest you.