

Reasons to notify your sex partners:

- Helps stop the chain of HIV transmission
- Gives present and past partners an opportunity you might not have had
- Your partner can get medical care sooner
- Relieves stress and guilt
- Improved health for your partners
- Makes the community a healthier place

You can get help telling your sex partners:

You work with a Partner Services Specialist to make a notification plan for your partners.

This can include coaching / help for any partner you want to notify yourself.

When you want Partner Services to notify your partners, you share contact information with the Partner Services Specialist who then notifies your partners they should be tested for HIV (without telling them anything about you).

Resources:

For more information about HIV, call:

New York State AIDS Hotline (English):
1-800-541-AIDS (1-800-541-2437)

SIDA Hotline (Spanish):
1-800-233-7432

New York City AIDS Hotline:
1-800-TALK-HIV

New York State Domestic Violence Hotline:
In English: 1-800-942-6906
En Español: 1-800-942-6908

PARTNER SERVICES

PATIENT'S GUIDE

INFORMING your past and current partners is
HIV PREVENTION



State of New York
Department of Health

9593 (English) 9/10

What is Partner Services?

Partner Services is a free Health Department program that assists people with HIV by helping patients plan how to best notify sex and/or needle sharing partners of a possible exposure to HIV. Partner Services is voluntary.

Partner Services can be used by people newly diagnosed with HIV or people who have been aware of their HIV status for some time.

Partner Services is a confidential program. This means that your name will not be shared with your partners, and no one can find out that you used Partner Services.

Make a plan to notify partners:

The Partner Services Specialist will explain the service, and work with you on a notification plan. You may choose a different approach for each partner.

When you ask Partner Services to notify partners, they are then contacted by phone, mail, or email to set up a face-to-face meeting, to confidentially let them know that they may have been exposed to HIV.

No names or personal identifying information (including the dates of sex or needle sharing) are ever revealed, to protect your anonymity and privacy, as well as that of your partner.

Your partner will then be offered free HIV counseling and testing services.

Basic Steps:

- 1 You have received a positive HIV diagnosis OR you have known you had HIV for a while.
- 2 You have sex and/or needle sharing partners who you may have exposed to HIV.
- 3 You talk to your doctor or HIV test counselor to set a time to meet with Partner Services – either that day or soon after.
- 4 You meet with a Partner Services Specialist who explains the program.
- 5 Partner Services assists you in making a notification plan for each partner (including domestic violence screening). This can include help on how to tell partners yourself.
- 6 You provide information to help locate partners you want us to notify. Contact information you provide could include: first name, last name, address, phone number, email, or internet screen name. We can often find partners even if you have only limited contact information.
- 7 A Partner Services Specialist contacts your partners to set up a face-to-face meeting to let them know they might have been exposed to HIV.
- 8 Your partners are offered anonymous or confidential HIV counseling and testing.
- 9 Your partners receive their test result. Referrals for medical care and for other services are provided, if needed.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

After learning you are HIV positive you will have many issues to deal with. Some things you may not think about right away are your past and current sex partners (and people you may have shared needles with).

Someone you had sex with (or shared a needle with) had HIV and may not have even known they were carrying the virus. Likewise, you may have had sex with people before you knew you were infected. Those people need to know that they may have been exposed to HIV so they can get tested and get medical treatment, as appropriate.

No matter how you got HIV, the right thing to do is inform your partners. Even if the person you got it from didn't know, didn't tell you or wasn't able to tell you, you can make sure your partners are told.

Consider how you are going to let your partners know they may have been exposed to HIV. You can do this on your own, or you can take advantage of the Health Department's Partner Services program. The Partner Services Specialist will inform your partners for you, but will never tell them who you are – it is completely anonymous.

Informing your partners will help them take care of themselves and may prevent many other people from getting HIV. Please do your part.