

Keeping It



Real

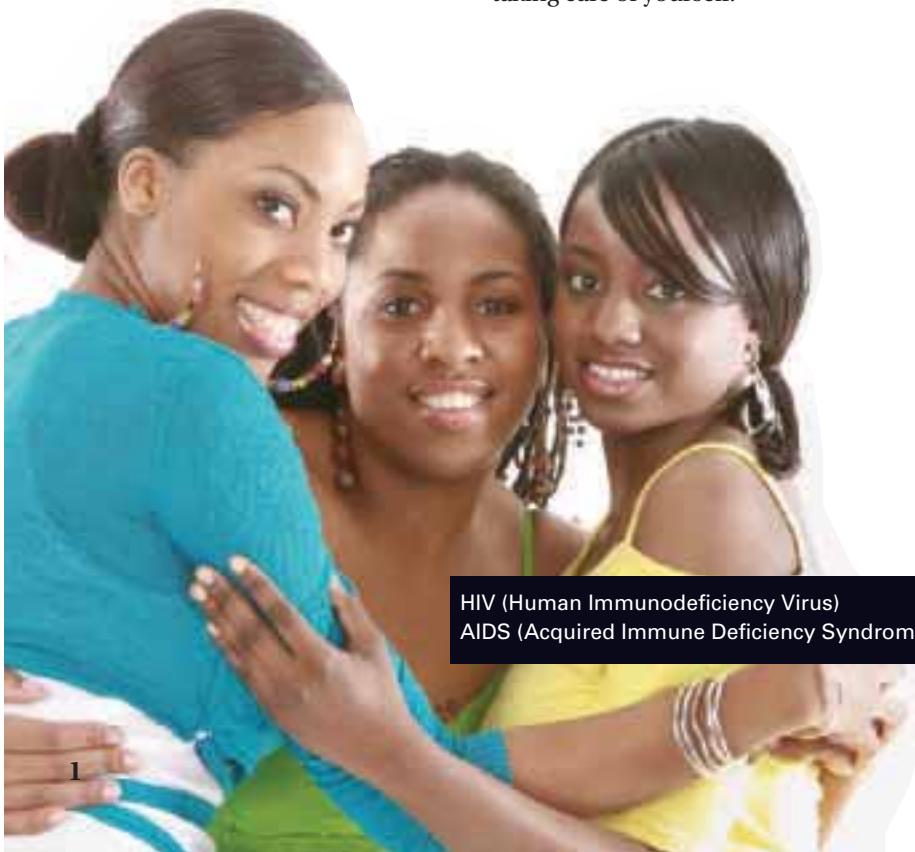


# KEEPING IT **Real**

**As women, we take care of our families. They are our pride and joy. In order to be there for them, we need to take care of ourselves first.**

**W**omen in North Carolina are being infected with HIV at very high rates. As you read this brochure, look for tips to prevent you from being at risk for HIV/AIDS.

What are you doing to protect yourself from this virus? Come on let's keep it real. We could all be at risk of getting HIV if we are sexually active. Do you know if you are HIV positive and have the virus? Get tested. Find out. Knowing will put you on the right track to taking care of yourself.



HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus)  
AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome)





## Don't Be Afraid. Get Tested!

Just thinking about HIV frightens many women. Their first response is often denial, "it couldn't happen to me." If a woman finds out she is HIV positive, she may be afraid she will die or not be able to take care of her family. She may also worry about how she will be treated at her job and by friends and family.

Those are all very frightening thoughts. However, when you get tested for HIV your test results are confidential. **No one has to know, until you are ready to tell them.** Don't be afraid to get tested for HIV; a test could save your life!



**Testing Positive** - If you are told that you test positive for HIV, you have the virus that can cause AIDS. It's important to know if you have HIV, so you can get medical help to help prevent AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome).





## HIV AND AIDS What Is The Difference?

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus that damages the immune system. The immune system helps the body fight infection and disease. When the immune system is damaged, it becomes weaker and weaker. At some point, HIV can turn into AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome).

When people develop AIDS, they often get other diseases and infections that are harder to cure. People with HIV can stay healthy for a very long time if they get medical care in the early stages.



### **Did You Know?**

In North Carolina, you will be tested for HIV at a prenatal checkup unless you refuse. If you are not tested before your baby is born, you or your baby will be tested at delivery. If you test positive, you will be offered special counseling and care.



## KEEPING IT REAL ...

# What Women Should Know About HIV

### HIV can be prevented.

- If you are not ready to be responsible and have safe sex, then don't have any sex. If you have sex, use a condom for all types of sex, even oral sex.
- Know your partner's sexual history. It is your right to know. If you have more than one sex partner, you are at greater risk of getting HIV.
- Don't ever share needles.



### Get tested — HIV can be treated, but not cured.

- When you get tested for HIV, someone will be there to talk to you about the test results.
- If you test positive, talk to your healthcare provider as soon as possible about the best treatment for you.
- If you are pregnant or thinking about getting pregnant, get tested for HIV. If you have HIV and are pregnant, you could pass it to your baby during pregnancy, labor or delivery and when you breastfeed. Passing HIV to your baby can be prevented.

# Real Questions Women Should Ask Their Partners

Do you always use condoms when you have sex?

Have you had any other sex partners?

Have you ever used or shared needles for shooting (injecting) drugs, steroids, or getting tattoos?

Have you ever been tested for HIV?



**R**emember that anyone having sex without using condoms, having more than one sex partner or injecting drugs and sharing needles is at risk for HIV.

You can't look at someone and tell if they have HIV. Lots of people with HIV look very healthy and might not know that they have HIV. The only way to know if you have HIV is to get tested for HIV. It is time for you to take control. Talk to your partner! Ask questions and get answers.



## Let's Keep It Real ...

*If this is your story, you are at risk. Get tested, for HIV.*

"Things started to happen so fast, that I forgot to tell him to use a condom and he didn't. It only happened one time, but I should have been more careful. Who knows how many others he has had sex with?"

"How could this happen to me? I am 16 weeks pregnant and I just found out that my husband of 10 years is having an affair. He promised me this would never happen again."

"I really love him and I believe that he has truly changed. He said that he only had a few relationships with men when he was younger and that he is only into women now."



# KEEPING IT Real

## Get Tested for HIV

You should get tested once a year for HIV if you or your partner:

- had more than one sex partner since your last HIV test.
- share needles to shoot (inject) drugs or steroids.
- think you COULD have had sex with a person infected with HIV.

If you get tested and the results are negative, talk to your healthcare provider about when you should be tested again.

**Get tested for HIV now**



Do it for yourself.

Do it for your family.

Do it for your future.

For more information call,  
the NC Family Health Resource Line  
1-800-367-2229 (English and Spanish)

**1-800-367-2229**  
NC Family Health Resource Line / Línea  
de Recursos de Salud Familiar  
English and Spanish



**GET REAL.  
GET TESTED.**

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