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December 1 is World AIDS Day! [1]

Week of:
Nov 29, 2019

HIV from oral sex with no condoms? [2]

Dear Alice,

What's the latest word on oral sex without condoms? What is the risk of HIV infection for each partner, with and without contact with orgasmic ejaculation? Sure I know that this is supposedly low-risk behavior, but if that is so, why are so many gay men still becoming HIV positive? Are they all having unprotected anal sex? Many of my friends practice oral sex without condoms and I tell them they are crazy but I've no hard data to back up the risk since not a single case of HIV has been proven to be transmitted by oral sex.

Signed,
Uneasy

Read more [2]

HIV positive and wondering about flu shots [3]

Dear Alice,

I'm HIV positive, very low viral load & great t-cell count (not on meds). I've been reading recently that flu shots aren't all they're cracked up to be. What are the dangers of a flu shot, and if my immune system is already doing well, should I still get a flu shot?

Read more [3]

HIV conversion sickness? [4]
(1) Dear Alice,
Is it true that after contact with the AIDS virus, one develops flu-like symptoms within 6 weeks?
— Symptom monger

(2) Alice,
I've heard about conversion sickness and being HIV positive; could you tell me more about the symptoms and what exactly it is?
— Unenlightened

(3) Dear Alice,
I have had an unsafe sexual encounter, receiving oral sex without wearing a condom. Three days after this, I noticed a slight itching on the tip of my penis, and three weeks later I started to feel a slight aching in my lower joints, in the thigh and leg muscles. This aching varied in location. I took an HIV antibody test, which was negative, nine weeks after having sex. Some weeks later on, I began to feel a little aching in my arms and other joints, as well, and I developed a fever and very swollen lymph glands in the throat. This lasted for about one-and-a-half weeks.

I went to a doctor and they took some blood tests, I don't know what, but the doctor said that it was a bacterial infection and I was given antibiotics. The fever and swollen glands ceased, but I still have aching muscles and joints, which has been going on for seven weeks after the fever. The aching is light, and varies in location from my underarms, overarms, legs, and thighs. Are these signs of HIV conversion sickness and do HIV antibodies only develop after the fever symptoms and not before this?
— Worried

Read more [4]

**Condoms with nonoxynol-9 (N-9) – do they increase HIV risk?** [5]

Dear Alice,

I have heard that the chemical nonoxynol-9 increased the chance of getting AIDS. Recently, I came across a product with octoxynol-9 in it. I wonder the difference between the two chemicals. Do they both increase HIV risk?

Read more [5]
Dear Alice,

My boyfriend claims he is HIV negative based on the fact that his blood donations have not been rejected. Is this a safe assumption? Is each and every pint of donated blood really tested for HIV and other blood-transmittable diseases? Do they really contact the donor if the blood is rejected because it tested positive for a blood-borne disease?

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