

66%

of gay men have had an HIV test
(up from under 50% in 2002)

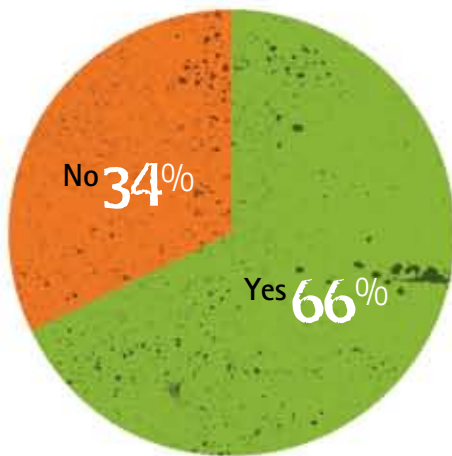


The Gay Men's Sex Survey is carried out by Sigma Research. Over 10,000 of you take part in each survey. Let's see what you've told us about your experiences of testing for HIV and using sexual health clinics.

HIV testing

In 2002 less than half of gay men had tested. Now most have.

1. Have you ever tested for HIV?



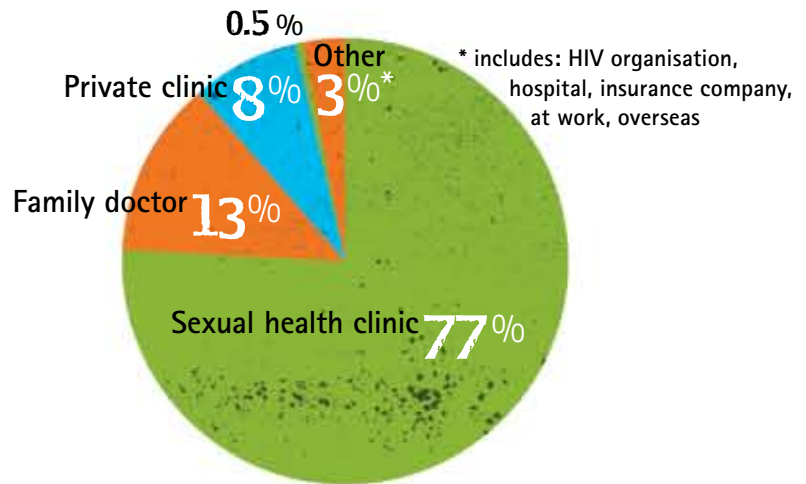
Gay men are recommended to test for HIV at least once a year.

2. If your last test was negative, when was it?	
Within the last 12 months	54%
1-5 years ago	35%
Over 5 years ago	10%
Not sure	1%

There are more places offering tests than ever.

3. Where did you have your last HIV test?

Home testing kit



Up to 10,000 gay men in the UK have picked up HIV but don't realise.

4. Have you had sex with a risk of getting HIV since your last negative test?	
Yes	27%
Don't know	9%
No	64%

“Doesn't HIV testing take a long time?”

You can have a 'rapid test' in many testing centres, with your result in 20 minutes. Use the clinic finder at www.thinkhiv.co.uk to find where you can test.

“Must I wait 3 months before I test for HIV?”

Tests today detect HIV earlier. There's no need to wait 3 months between taking a risk and testing. The clinic will advise you. Clinics are happy to test you anytime.



Clinics and check-ups

You can have some infections without noticing symptoms. So a sexual health check-up a couple of times a year makes sense – or more often if you're having sex with lots of men.

5. When did you last go to a sexual health or HIV clinic?

In the last month	10%
In the last year	25%
Over a year ago	18%
Over 5 years ago	9%
Never	38%

Sexual health clinics are rated highly by men who use them but there are other places you could consider for check-ups and treatment.

6. Where did you go for your last sexual health check-up?

Sexual health clinic	81%
Family doctor (GP)	11%
Private clinic	5%
HIV clinic	2%
Other	1%*

* includes: HIV organisations, hospital, overseas

“Can't I wait until I get ill before I test?”

Waiting until you get ill before you test and start treatment means less chance of a long, healthy life. For HIV drugs to work best they need to be started before HIV does too much damage to your body.

Tests and treatment at clinics are free. But that's not all they offer...

7. Which services did you use when you last used a sexual health or HIV clinic?*

Check-up	68%
HIV test	62%
Had symptoms/problem looked at	29%
Vaccination against hepatitis B	25%
Free condoms and lube	24%
Information	21%
Treatment (not for HIV)	19%
Someone to talk to/counselling	12%
HIV treatment	9%
PEP (post exposure prophylaxis)	1%**

* Total more than 100% as men used more than one service.

**PEP is a treatment that, if taken soon enough after unprotected sex, can stop someone getting HIV. More details at www.chapsonline.org.uk/pep

Some gay men might be nervous about clinics but after they've been they're glad they went.

8. How would you rate the last clinic you went to?

“I felt I could talk about sexual risks I'd taken” 83%

“The staff listened carefully to what I said” 88%

“I was treated with courtesy and respect” 92%

“The staff seemed to know their job well” 93%

“I'd recommend that clinic to other gay men” 87%

Percentage of people who agreed with each statement.



What is the National Gay Men's Sex Survey?

Since 1997 Sigma Research has been asking gay men about their sex lives and what they need to stay safe. Carried out in collaboration with over 100 agencies that promote gay men's health, it's part of the CHAPS programme, co-ordinated by Terrence Higgins Trust and funded by the Department of Health. Using booklets and internet questionnaires, it's the biggest survey of its kind in the world. The information is used to plan sexual health promotion and HIV prevention for gay men.

The figures you've seen here are taken from the surveys of 2002 and 2004-2007, with figures rounded up or down to the nearest percentage point.

The survey is taking a break this year but keep an eye out for it in 2010. A big **THANK YOU** to all of you who've taken part in the surveys over the years. You can see the results from previous surveys at www.gmss.org.uk or email gary.hammond@sigmaresearch.org.uk

All you need to know about HIV testing and sexual health clinics is at www.thinkHIV.co.uk

Just type in where you live into the clinic finder to find your nearest sexual health clinic or rapid HIV test centre.

Data used in this report.

Front page and question 1: men recruited into the 2007 survey via the internet

Question 2: findings from the 2006 survey

Questions 3, 4 and 6: findings from the 2004 survey

Questions 5, 7 and 8: data from the 2005 survey.

The HIV and sexual health charity for life

Website: www.tht.org.uk THT Direct: 0845 12 21 200

Registered office: 314-320 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8DP

Tel: 020 7812 1600 Email: info@tht.org.uk

© Terrence Higgins Trust, August 2009. Code 01180.00

Terrence Higgins Trust is a registered charity in England and Wales (reg. no. 288527) and in Scotland (SC039986). Company reg.no. 1778149. A company limited by guarantee.

If you have any questions or comments about this resource, or would like information on the evidence used to produce it, please email feedback@tht.org.uk

The information included in this publication was correct at the time of going to press. We plan to review publications after two years. For updates or for the latest information, visit www.tht.org.uk

Design Felton Communication 020 7405 0900 Ref: 11290



Look out for this leaflet about HIV tests and sexual health clinics.

You can also download a copy online from www.tht.org.uk/thinkhiv

For gay men who've recently tested HIV positive this site has

advice and information, including video clips and diaries from recently diagnosed men:

www.tht.org.uk/whatnext

You can talk to someone about safer sex, HIV testing or clinics by calling THT Direct 0845 12 21 200 (10am-10pm weekdays, midday until 6pm weekends).

They have details of Terrence Higgins Trust centres in the Midlands, Brighton, Bristol, Cardiff, London, Oxfordshire, Swansea and other parts of the country.

Other local support and information:

Leicester

TRADE 0116 254 1747

Liverpool

Armistead Project 0151 227 1931

London

GMFA 020 7738 6872

Manchester

Lesbian & Gay Foundation 0161 235 8035

Plymouth

Eddystone Trust 01752 257 077

Yorkshire

Yorkshire Mesmac 0113 244 4209

Sheffield Centre

for HIV & Sexual Health 0114 226 1907