How to reduce risk

⁕ Always use a condom when having any form of sex, including use of sex toys. This applies to casual and regular partners.
⁕ Don’t share rolled banknotes or paper, pipes, foil or straws when snorting drugs.
⁕ Don’t share needles or any other injecting equipment, as in spoons, water cups or filters.
⁕ Make sure that disposable sterile needles are used for all body piercing and tattooing. Always attend a reputable licenced business.
⁕ Always clean up blood spillages with undiluted household bleach.
⁕ Don’t share razors, toothbrushes, nail scissors, clippers, tweezers or nailbrushes as these may hold small droplets of blood which may carry infection.

What to do if you’re worried

If you’ve engaged in risky behaviour described in this leaflet, don’t panic, speak to your yzup worker today about having a simple test or visiting your GP or Sexual Health Centre. The results will take up to two weeks.

Regardless of your results, the safest way to protect yourself and others is to use condoms and never share drug taking equipment.
What is a BBV?

A blood borne virus (BBV) infects your blood and attacks your body’s functions. Infections can cause serious long term illness and early death.

Blood borne viruses include,

- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis C
- HIV, which causes AIDS

Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B is a virus that causes inflammation of the liver. This can be transmitted through blood to blood contact. Sex (semen and vaginal fluids) breast milk and sharing injecting/snorting equipment. This can go undetected for some years, it is important to know there are vaccinations available at your local GP and Sexual Health Service.

Hepatitis C

Hepatitis C is carried in blood and affects the liver which can lead to cirrhosis and liver cancer. You can be infected by contact with blood from an infected person if you share injecting/snorting equipment or other personal items.

HIV

HIV is a virus that infects the body’s immune system, weakening its ability to fight other infections and eventually leading to AIDS. The virus can be passed by bodily fluids like semen, pre-cum and vaginal fluids, blood (including menstrual blood), anal mucus and breast milk. There is no cure. However, infection can be managed by taking a powerful combination of medication.

Where to find help

Local services

- Your YZUP worker
- Sexual Health Centre
- GP
- Brook Advisory Centre