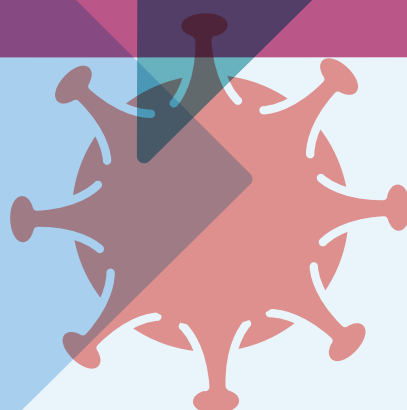
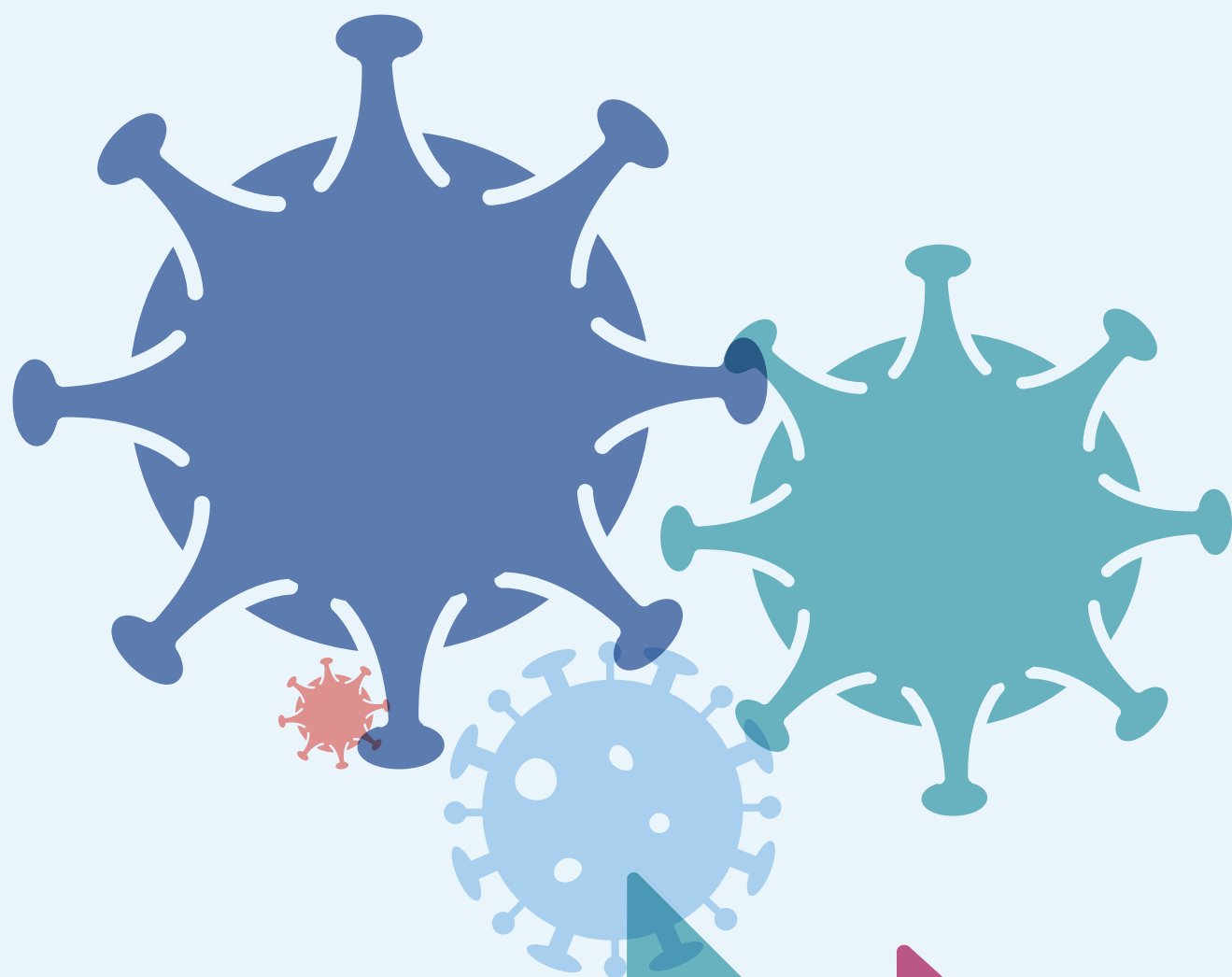


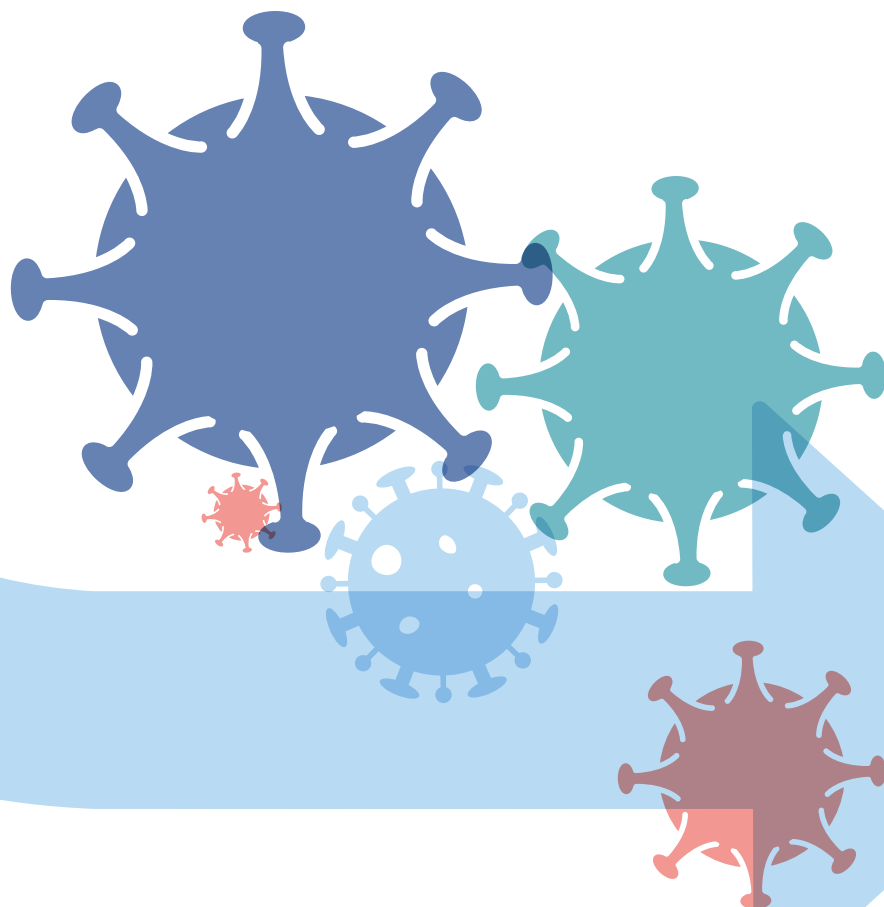
The basics

Transmission facts



**There are only a few
ways in which HIV can
be passed on.**

**HIV CAN be passed on
during the following
activities.**



Vaginal sex, without a condom



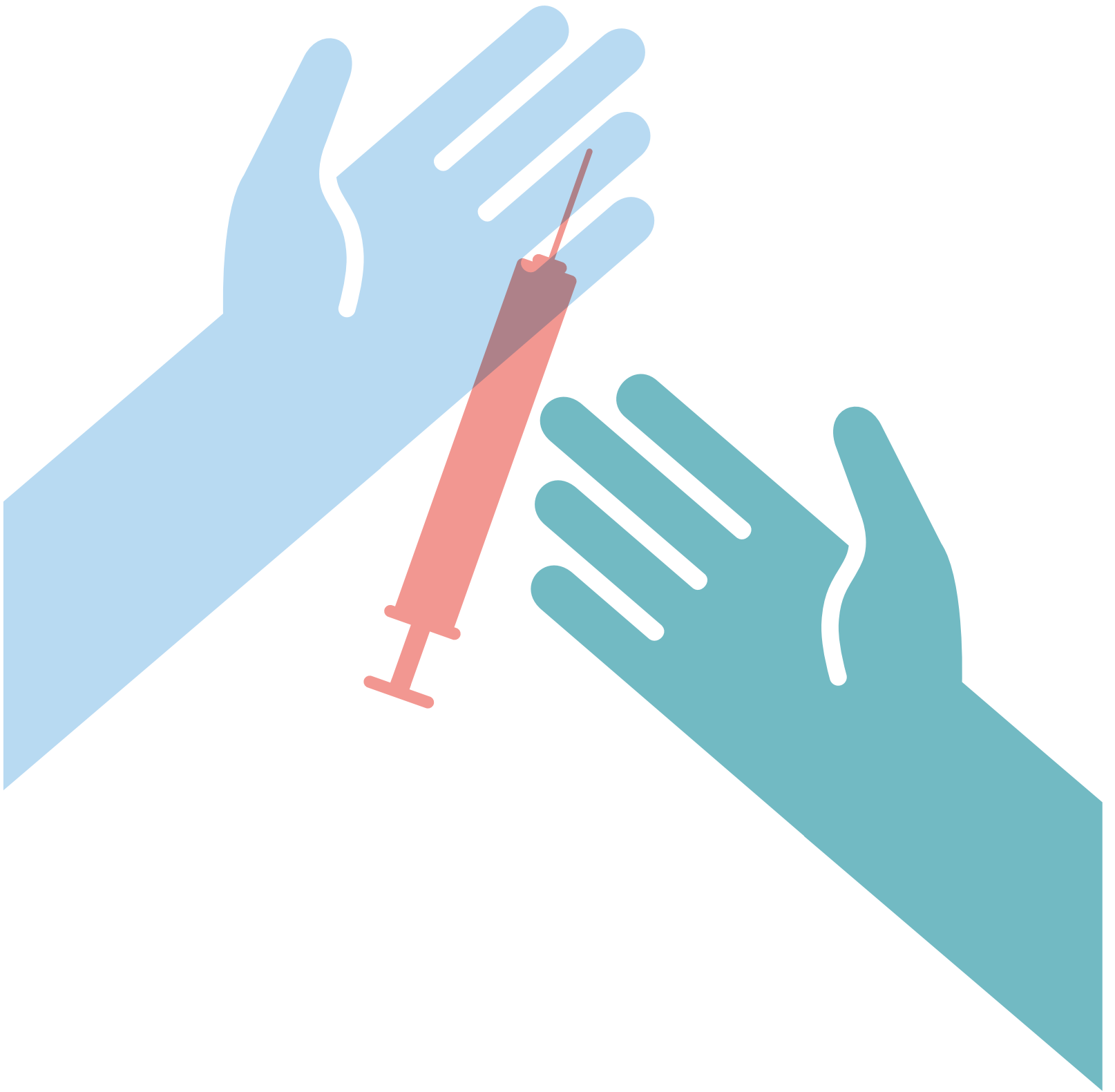
Anal sex, without a condom



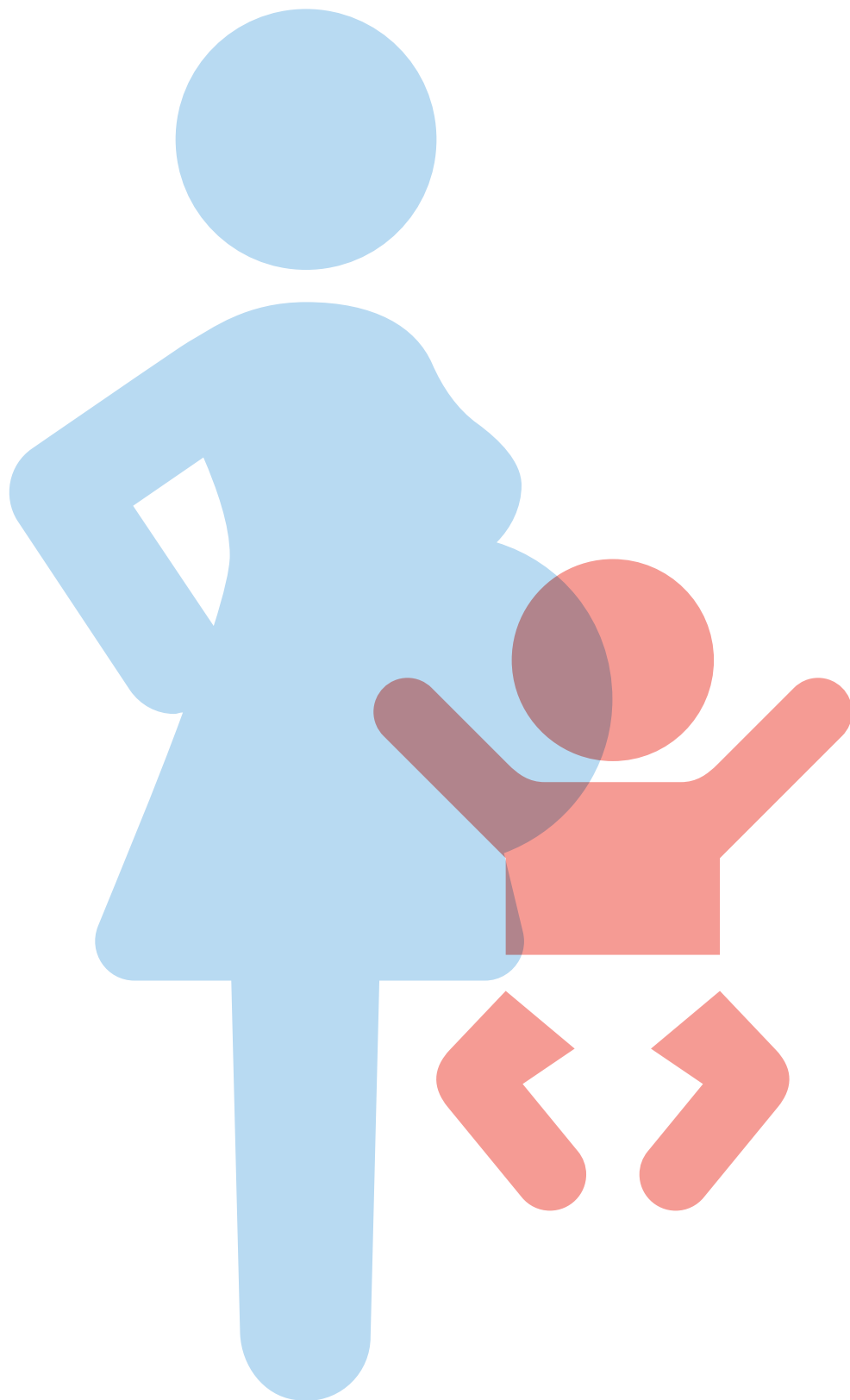
**Oral sex, on a man,
without a condom**
*(Although there is less risk than
through vaginal sex or anal sex.)*



**Injecting drugs,
if equipment is shared**



**During pregnancy or childbirth,
if precautions aren't taken**



Breastfeeding



**People sometimes worry
about HIV in situations
where transmission is
impossible.**

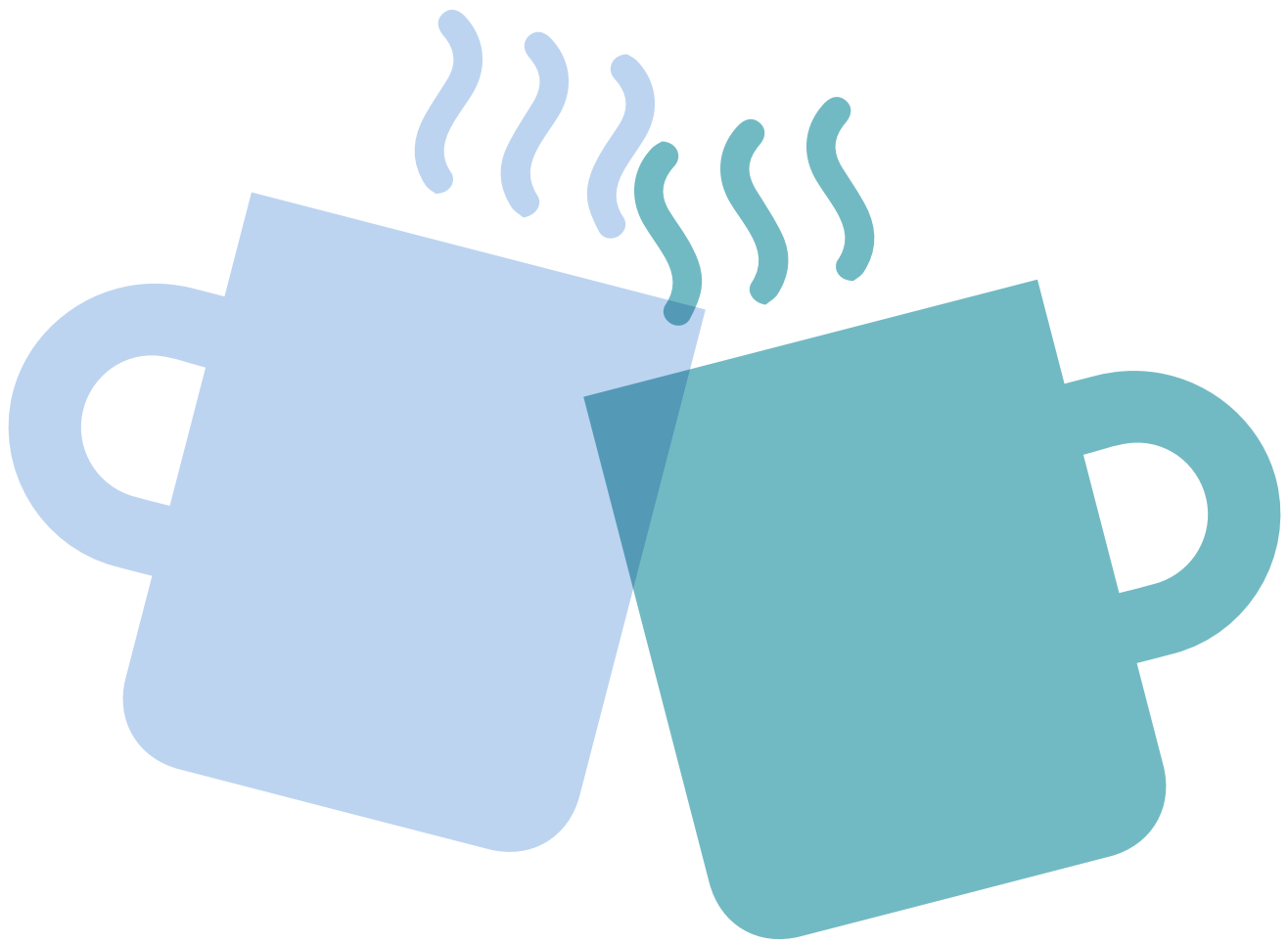
**There is NO RISK of HIV
being passed on during
the following activities.**



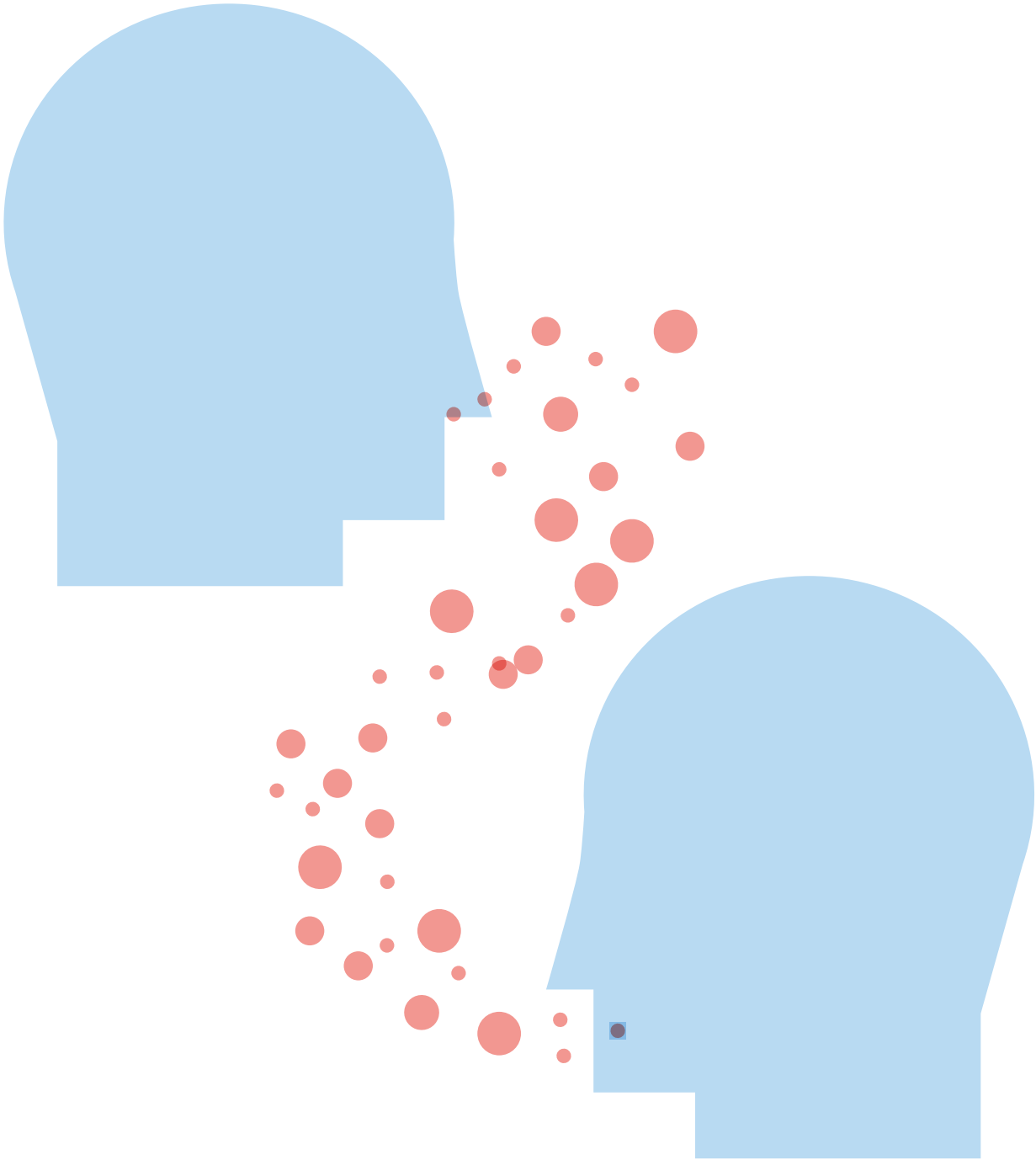
**Shaking hands,
hugging or kissing**



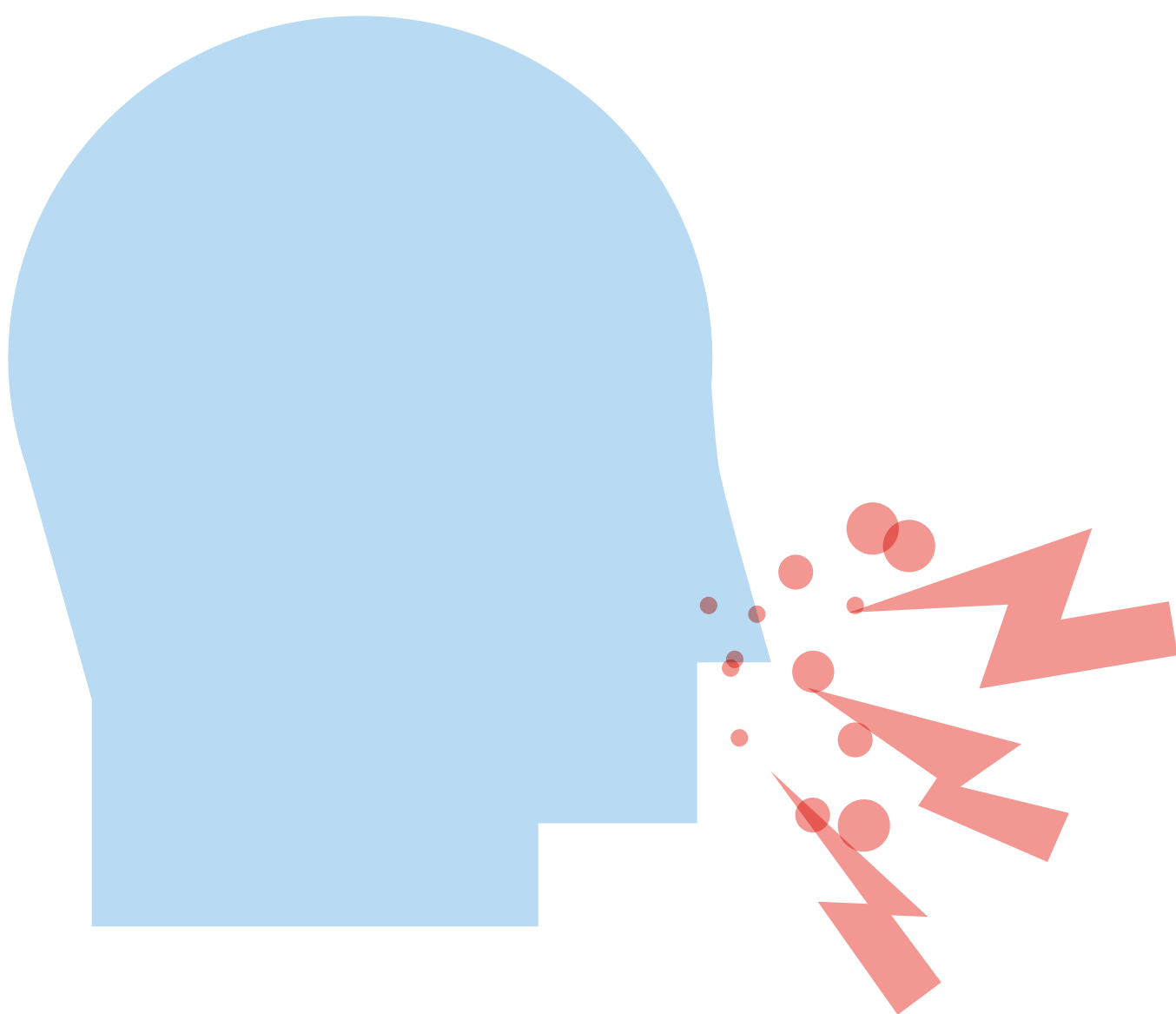
Sharing plates or cups



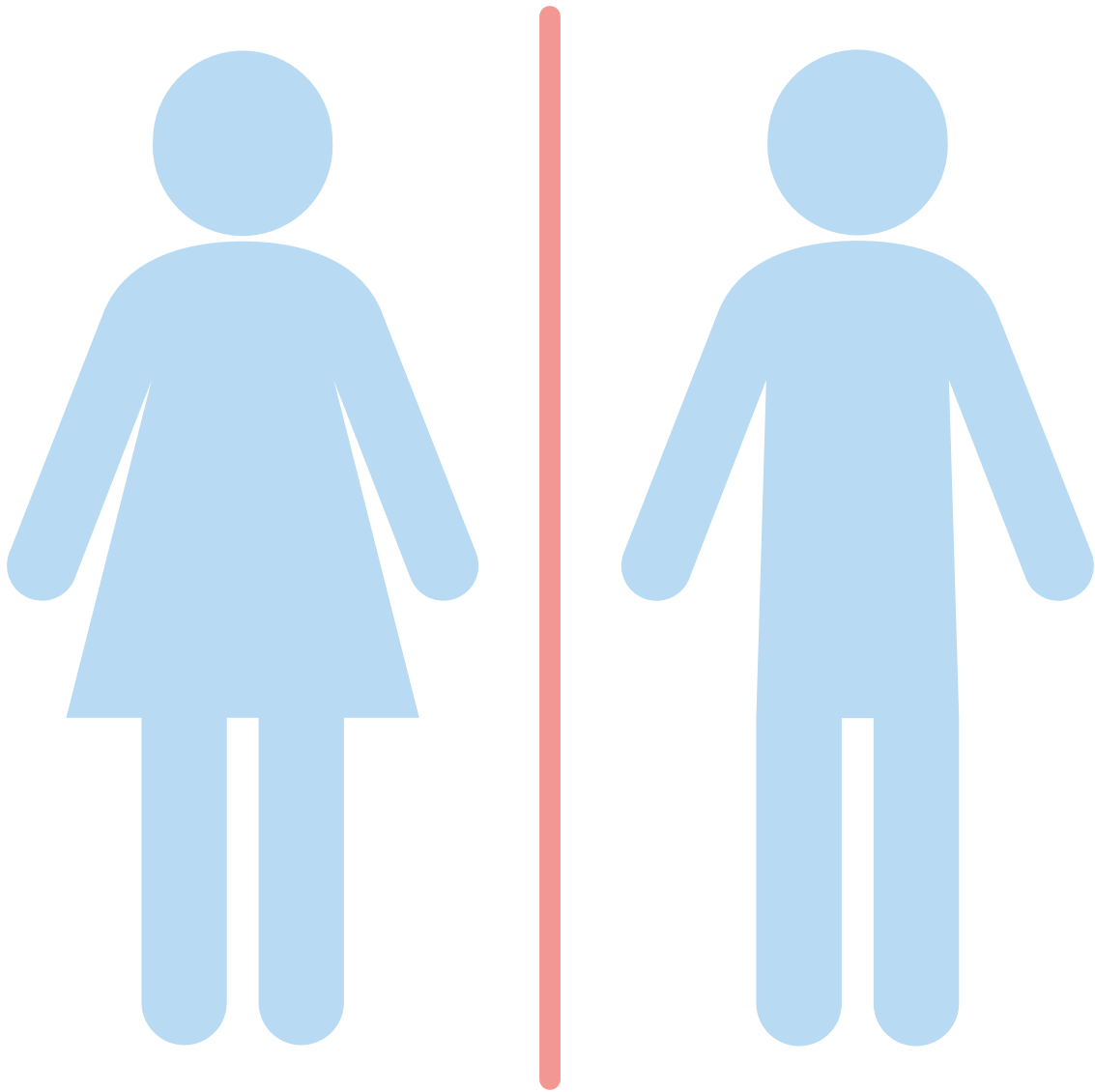
Breathing the same air



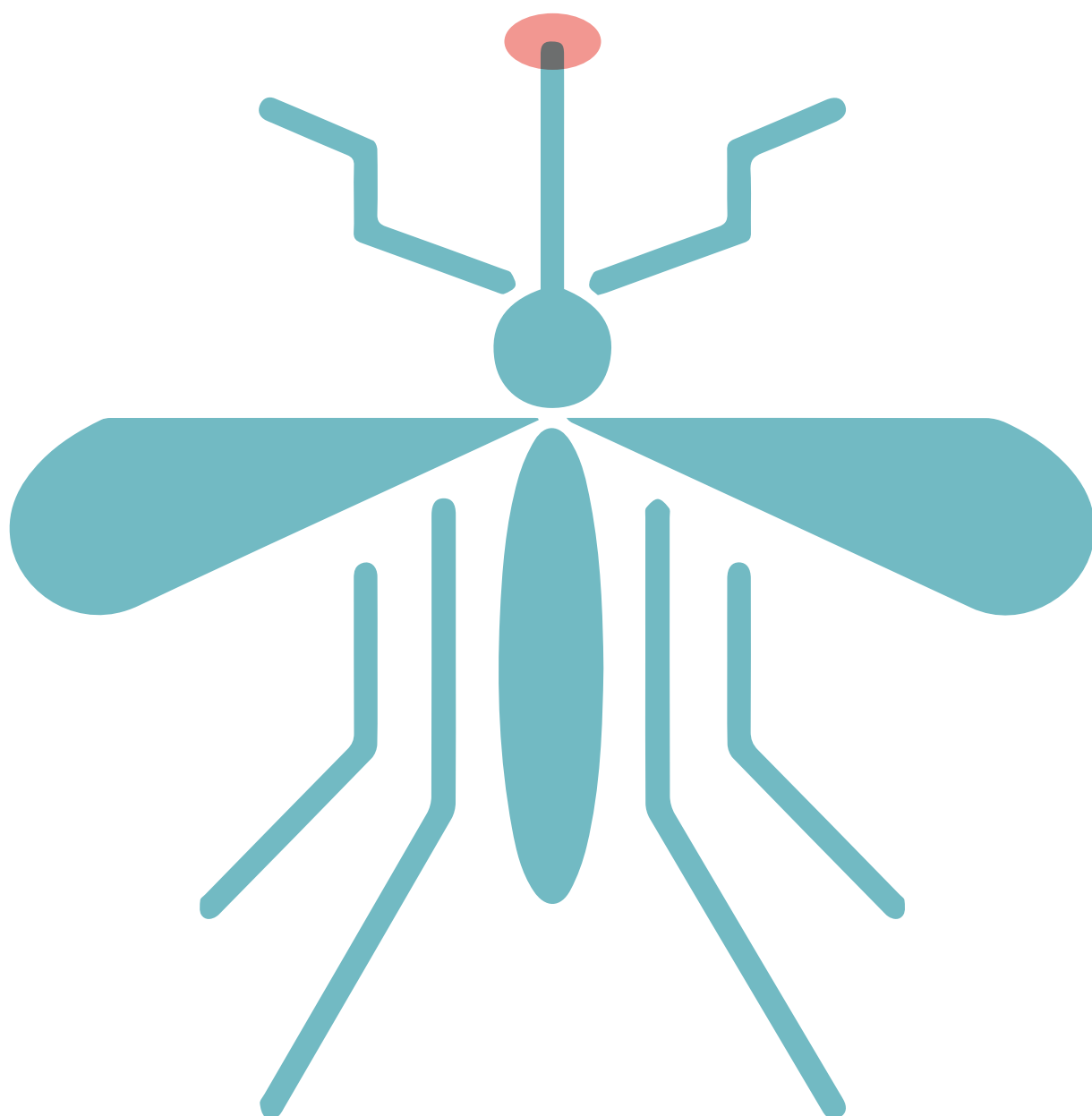
**Spitting, sneezing
or coughing**



Using a toilet



Mosquito bites



Important points

- HIV can only be passed on when one person's body fluids get inside another person.
- The only body fluids which contain enough HIV for the infection to be passed on are semen, fluids from the vagina, moisture in the rectum, blood and breast milk.
- Effective HIV treatment stops HIV from being passed on during sex. You can also stop transmission with condoms or PrEP (regular medication to prevent infection).

Notes

Blood transfusions

- Some poorer countries do not use modern methods to test donated blood for HIV, so there is a risk of HIV being passed on through a blood transfusion.
- In the UK, all donated blood is carefully tested for HIV, so the risk of HIV being passed on through a blood transfusion is extremely low.

Notes

Undetectable = Untransmittable (U=U)

- When a person is living with HIV and is on effective treatment, the amount of HIV in their body fluids falls drastically, to the point where there is not enough HIV to pass on during sex. This low level of HIV is called an 'undetectable viral load'.
- When someone is undetectable, there is zero risk of HIV transmission to a sexual partner.

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)

- PrEP is a form of HIV prevention in which people who don't have HIV take medication to protect themselves from HIV. PrEP involves taking medication on an ongoing basis before and after possible exposure to HIV.

For more information on this topic

- Read our '[HIV transmission](#)' page.
- Read our '[HIV & sex](#)' booklet.

For information in other languages

- Visit www.aidsmap.com/languages

For more information about HIV

- Visit our website www.aidsmap.com
- Speak to an adviser at THT Direct
0808 802 1221

Other titles in The basics series

- [Side effects](#)
- [Health checks](#)
- [How treatment works](#)

About NAM

NAM is a charity that works to change lives by sharing information about HIV & AIDS.

We believe that independent, clear, accurate information is vital to those living with HIV.

www.aidsmap.com

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www.aidsmap.com/donate

This information isn't intended to replace discussion with your doctor about your treatment and care, but it may help you to think about any questions you'd like to ask your healthcare team.

If you would like to translate, adapt or reproduce this leaflet, please contact us.