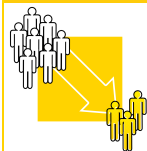


Strategies for with effectiveness is low or uncertain *The effectiveness of these strategies is low or uncertain and often depends on other factors. Combining them with other strategies is recommended.*



HAVING FEWER PARTNERS

Choosing to limit the number of sexual partners you have

Description

- The number of partners you have can be a factor which in increasing the risk of HIV transmission. The more sexual partners you have, the more chance you have of being exposed to HIV or another STI.
- Frequent changes in sexual partners or having more than sexual partner at the same time could contribute considerably to HIV transmission.^{1,2}
- This means it's possible to reduce the possibility of HIV and STI infection by having fewer partners.

Effectiveness

- A number of studies have tried to identify factors associated with contracting HIV. A high number of sexual partners has often been identified as a factor.^{3,4}
 - For example, one study showed that men who had had 4 or more sexual partners in the past 6 months were more at risk of contracting HIV compared to men who reported one partner or none at all.⁵
- Reducing the number of partners has had positive results among heterosexuals in countries with high HIV prevalence (Thailand and Uganda).¹

Acceptability

- In the *Mobilise!* survey among men who have sex with men in Montreal, most (93%) respondents knew about the reduction in number of sexual partners as a risk reduction strategy.⁶
- Advantages of having fewer partners:
 - It's possible to take more time with each partner and develop a trusting relationship.⁷
 - Can give you a greater sense of empowerment and control over your sexuality and sexual health.
 - Not dependent on what your partners do.
 - Does not require use of a service.
 - No costs are involved.
- Disadvantages of having fewer partners:
 - May be difficult to maintain this strategy on a day-to-day basis and say no to potential partners.⁷
 - May cause feelings of sexual dissatisfaction.⁷
 - Reduces the risk of coming into contact with HIV and STIs, but there can still be risks if this strategy is not used in combination with other strategies.⁷

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