

Boys ask - Experts answer

On this website you will find answers to questions from refugee boys about sexuality, desire and protection. If you don't know the terms, you can read them again here:

Vocabulary Help

The Youth4Youth boys' edition is also available bilingual in [German/Arabic](#) and [German/Dari](#). Youth4Youth (girls ask) is also available as a bilingual brochure in [German/Arabic](#), [German/Dari](#).

The web versions in English ([girls](#) / boys) and Ukrainian (girls / boys) are also available in PDF format.



Sex

1. What is sex, anyway?

Sex can be sexually arousing acts between people or with yourself (masturbation). That means it is more than just sexual intercourse. Sex can also include kissing, caressing and achieving satisfaction using the mouth or hands. The important thing is that you and your partner enjoy it. For many people, sex is very important, it makes them feel good and gives them pleasure. However, people feel and experience sex very differently.

2. At what age are you allowed to have sex?

In Germany, there are laws to protect children and young people in the area of sexuality. It is forbidden for adults and adolescents to perform sexual acts with children under the age of 14! This also includes French kissing or petting. From the age of 14, you are considered “sexually mature” in Germany, meaning you are mostly allowed to decide for yourself whether and with whom you want to have sex. You can read about what to consider here at Zanzu. In addition, parents or other guardians have the duty to supervise their children until they are 18. This means that they are responsible for ensuring that nothing happens to their children. They can intervene if they are concerned and suspect danger for their child.

You can find more rules and more detailed information [here](#).

The basic rule is that everyone involved has to want to have sex.



Anyone who forces you or threatens you with violence is liable for prosecution. It doesn't matter how old you are! And the right to say no applies to all people, no matter who they are.

3. How often do you have to have sex?

There are no rules about how often you should have sex. The need for sexual activity is different for everyone and can change with time. How often people sleep with each other depends on both partners. Every relationship is based on the desires and needs of those involved. What both partners want and mutually agree on is correct and important. Men and women are both also allowed to say "No!".

4. Do women have the same sex drive as men?

Whether and how the desire for sex differs between men and women is not yet completely understood. Men often report more frequent sexual contact than women. However, regardless of age and gender, the need for sexuality can vary greatly from person to person and can change throughout life. It is influenced by external and internal factors. For example, success and a positive self-image can be beneficial for feelings of desire, while anxiety, stress and pressure can be a hindrance.

5. How long does good sex take?

Good sex is not necessarily a question of duration, but of sensation. That means it may take different amounts of time. Good sex should be fun and fulfilling for everyone involved. How beautiful and intense sex feels also depends on other emotions and external influences. A lot of people think that sex is over once the man has had an orgasm. That is not necessarily true. If you want to, you can give and receive pleasurable experiences in different



ways, for example using your mouth and hands. A stiff penis is not necessary for that.

6. What is an orgasm?



The orgasm is seen as the peak of sexual pleasure and arousal. After a phase of strong sexual tension, which keeps rising, there usually is a sense of relief, followed by a state of relaxation. People often describe their orgasms as explosive and associate them with feelings of happiness. However, sex can also be pleasurable without an orgasm.

For men and boys, orgasm and ejaculation can occur at the same time; though they can also happen independently of each other. At times, women and girls can also ejaculate. Orgasms will be experienced very differently for everyone.

7. How do I know if the woman or girl wants to have sex with me?



This is a very important question, because it is always crucial that both partners want to have sex with each other. There are no universal signs that show you if the person is in the mood for sex. Sometimes it might not be that easy to find out if the other person is even interested in you – and if they are, how much... Maybe they just like you as a friend and that's it. A person might even want to be affectionate or want to kiss you and not want to go further and actually have sex. You always have to respect that. It's always best to ask, so you don't do something the other person doesn't want or doesn't like.



8. How can I tell if a woman is aroused?



When a woman is sexually aroused, the blood supply to her genitals increases. The outer and inner labia swell, the clitoris becomes slightly larger. For some, the breasts swell and the nipples become more prominent. Also, if the vagina becomes moist, this can show that the woman is aroused. However, signs of physical arousal do not necessarily mean that girls or boys really want to have sex. Sometimes our bodies react differently than we want them to. For example, a girl's vagina might get wet, but she doesn't actually want to have sex. You can also look at [question 7](#) again. It may also happen that a person wants to have sex, but the body doesn't necessarily show signs of arousal.

9. Is the first time painful for a woman?

Women and men have many "first times" in their lives – the first kiss, the first relationship, the first sexual contact. When two people have sex for the first time, it can be a very exciting and new experience for both of them. However, some women are afraid that their first sexual intercourse with a man might hurt. Generally, sexual intercourse can hurt if the woman's vagina is not wet enough or the man is not careful enough. This means you should always wait until the vagina is wet and ready for penetration. Sexual intercourse can also hurt women if they are very tense. So it is important that the woman feels comfortable. Partners should generally pay attention to each other and also ask if the current situation is comfortable for the other person – this applies to sex in general, not just the "first time".

You may have heard that all women bleed the first time they have sex. We'll explain why this is not true in [question 10](#).

10. What does it actually mean to lose your virginity?

Many people believe that you can tell if girls and women are "virgins" by



looking at the so-called hymen. This is not true! Neither women nor men can tell if they have already had sexual intercourse.

We speak of “virginity” when people have never had sex with another person. This can mean boys as well as girls. Even the term “hymen” is misleading; it would be better to speak of a vaginal ring. The “hymen” is not a skin that closes the vagina, but rather a tissue that surrounds the entrance to the vagina and can look very different from person to person.[i] Since this tissue stretches when the penis is inserted, it is not possible to see whether a girl or woman has had sexual intercourse before or not. Sometimes there can be small tears in the skin of the vagina. But less than half of all girls and women bleed during or after the first time they have sex. It may happen later or it may not happen at all for some. It is also rare for men to bleed.

In some families, the girl is expected to bleed – as a sign of her virginity. This can cause stress or pressure. If this happens to you, you can talk to your friends about it. Together you can think about how you want to handle the topic with your family. You can also go to [counselling centres](#).

Back to the question of what “losing your virginity” means: actually, you can’t “lose” anything when you have your first sexual experience. For some, their first sexual contacts have a lot of meaning, for others less so.

[i] Anna Knöfel Magnusson: *Vaginal corona: Myths surrounding virginity: your questions answered*. Brommatryck & Brolins AB, Stockholm 2009; vgl. *Jungfernhäutchen (Hymen)*, abgerufen am 28.11.2022, von www.zanzu.de/de/koerper/koerper-der-frau/jungfernhaeutchen-hymen/



11. Do "virgins" have to prepare before their first time?



Anyone who wants to have sex for the first time should think about pregnancy prevention and protection against sexually transmitted diseases beforehand. Other than that, there is no special preparation that girls or boys need to do before their first sexual experience. It is important to take your time, trust your own feelings and take those of your partner seriously.

Sex or no sex

12. Can some people live without sex?



There are people who choose sexual abstinence, which means abstaining from sexual activity, even though they feel a desire for it. This may be for a limited time, for example when abstaining from sexuality before marriage or during exam preparations, but it can also be for the rest of someone's life. The extent to which people really succeed in completely abstaining from sexual activity in the long term is not known. In research, however, it is as-



sumed that sexual desire can decrease if sexual activity is abstained for a very long time. However, sexual desire may also increase as a result of abstinence. Very few people never feel sexual desire or the need for sexual contact. Some then call themselves “asexual”.

13. Why do I masturbate, how can I stop (myself from doing it)?

First of all, you need to know that it is okay to masturbate. The need for sexual pleasure is natural and an important part of our personality. That is why sexuality is also counted among the basic human needs. You can't get rid of it, and masturbation (also called onanism) is a part of that.

“Some do it frequently and some rarely or not at all. How often you do it can also fluctuate. Everyone has their own needs, and that's okay. Masturbation is associated for many with a pleasurable feeling. Besides, it's one thing you don't have to tell anyone. [...] And you don't have to be ashamed of masturbation at all.”^[i]

[i] *Selbstbefriedigung*, abgerufen am 28.11.2022, von www.loveline.de/themen/sex/selbstbefriedigung/

14. Masturbation is costing me a lot of energy and my concentration is suffering. How can I keep it under control?

During puberty, you may think about sex a lot. Sometimes this can make you unfocused and be distracting. Masturbation does not increase these thoughts, rather you will often feel more relaxed afterwards and it can help you focus on other things again.

Every person can decide for themselves whether and how often they satisfy themselves. Some do it every day, others once a week, some never. This



says nothing about whether they are good or bad people. In the meantime, other things that interest you, like sports or hobbies, can help you think less about sex or forget about it altogether. However, if you feel like you can't think about anything else and you are struggling a lot, you can always turn to psychologically trained experts. You can find [links here](#) and [counselling centres here](#).

15. Is masturbation harmful?

No, masturbation is not unhealthy for you! It is completely natural and helps you explore your own body, desires and sensations. You can find out in which places touch may feel arousing to you and you may also experience what an orgasm is. It is great to know your own desires and can make it easier to have a fulfilling sexual relationship with a partner later on. The same is true for girls and women.

16. Why do I keep thinking about masturbating?

During puberty, you get the desire to feel and satisfy yourself sexually. The body changes from that of a child to that of an adult. This means, for example, that boys' voices become deeper, beards start to grow, they become stronger and experience their first ejaculation. For girls, among other things, their breasts grow and they start having their period. This all happens because the body releases hormones. These hormones make you want to have sex more. This is completely normal.

17. Do girls masturbate too?

As with boys, it varies whether and how often girls masturbate. For girls, as



well as for boys, it is good to get to know their own bodies and to find out what kind of touch does or doesn't feel good. And for girls, too, masturbation does not harm their health.

Gay, lesbian, bi

18. Why do some boys fall in love with boys and some girls with girls?



Being in love is a great feeling. You want to be close to the other person. It's always the same, whether that person is a boy or a girl. There are many ways to be in a relationship. Homosexuality is also part of this diversity, meaning that girls may fall in love with girls and boys with boys. Some people also fall in love with both men and women, which is called bisexuality. Some people are attracted to people regardless of gender identity, this is called pansexuality.

No one can choose their orientation. No one can be brought up or even seduced into a homosexual orientation. Homosexuality is not a disease that needs to be treated! Sexual diversity is something very natural.



19. How do you know if you are homosexual or bi?



Most people start to become interested in other people sexually during puberty. If you are a boy who is only interested in girls or a girl who is only interested in boys, you will probably not give much thought to why you are heterosexual.

You can tell if you are homosexual, for example, if you are a boy and find another boy sexually attractive. Maybe you want to be physically close to him and don't know if it's friendship or love. Sometimes people are physically attracted to both boys and girls. This is called "bisexuality" (=bi). Discovering that you are homosexual or bi doesn't happen overnight. Usually it's a longer process and the question of whether it's "just" a phase might come up. Homosexual or bisexual young people might feel self-conscious, mostly because they are afraid of not being accepted by everyone or of disappointing friends and family. They might also be afraid that others will treat them badly or that they will be discriminated against. Often, young people will try to hide the fact that they are homosexual or bisexual. Therefore, it is important not to exclude gay, lesbian and bisexual friends, but to accept them and make them feel safe.

20. What does being trans* mean?



There are different ways to define the term "trans", that is what the asterisk (*) stands for.

Generally, being "trans*" means that a person's gender identity doesn't align with the sex and gender that they were assigned at birth. People that were assigned male at birth but identify as female are called trans-women/girls. Equally, people that were assigned female at birth but identify as male are called trans-men/boys. However, some people who don't identify with any gender also sometimes refer to themselves as trans*.[1]



Trans* people can be hetero-, bi or homosexual.

[i] *Transgeschlechtlich*, abgerufen am 28.11.2022, von www.loveline.de/themen/geschlechter/transgeschlechtlich/

21. How many people are gay, bi, lesbian or trans*?

Surveys have shown that between 5 and 10 percent of the population are homosexual or bisexual. However, these results also depend on how strongly these people are discriminated against in a society since those who are afraid of discrimination are unlikely to openly reveal their sexual identity and orientation. Incidentally, the number of people who are attracted to the same sex at least some of the time is much higher even though these people might not describe themselves as gay, lesbian or bi. There is still no reliable data on the number and percentage of trans* people. It is important to note that gender and sexual orientation are two different things, this means trans* people are not automatically gay or lesbian. A trans* person can be heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual.

Pregnancy



22. How is a child created and where do children come from?



A child is created through the fusion of a woman's egg cell with a man's sperm cell.

Women have two ovaries in their lower abdomen, one to the right and one to the left of the uterus. Each month, an egg matures in one of the two ovaries. When an egg is mature, it reaches one of the two fallopian tubes, which are connected to the [uterus](#), during ovulation. There it can be fertilised by a sperm cell during the next 12 to 18 hours.

For this to happen, sperm cells have to pass through the vagina to the egg cell. This happens when a woman and a man have sexual intercourse without contraception and the man ejaculates in the woman's vagina. In this case, 50 to 500 million sperm cells can flow towards the fallopian tubes. This can also take place if there is semen from a previous ejaculation on the penis or fingers and sperm cells enter the vagina and from there reach the fallopian tubes.

If the mature egg cell fuses with a sperm cell, this fertilised egg cell moves to the uterus in the coming days and slowly grows there (see also question 1). In biological terms, this growth is caused by the fertilised egg cell dividing into more and more cells. In the beginning, this ball of cells is called an embryo. The embryo is nourished through the umbilical cord of the pregnant woman. After about nine and a half months, the development of the unborn child is complete and it can come into the world.

When the pregnant woman goes into labour, she usually starts having contractions. The amniotic sac, which encloses the baby in the uterus, bursts. Amniotic fluid then flows out of the woman's vagina. During contractions, the uterus tightens. This helps the woman to push the baby out through the vagina. This is often very strenuous and painful for the woman. If the woman's partner is present, they are often excited. In Germany, most babies are born in hospital, but some are born in so-called birthing centres or at home. Sometimes a caesarean section has to be performed. In this case, the baby is surgically removed from the mother's womb – this can only be



done in hospital.

23. What should I do to avoid an unwanted pregnancy with my partner?

For boys and men, apart from abstaining from sexual intercourse, the condom is the only way to avoid unwanted pregnancy. The condom also protects men and women from contracting a sexually transmitted infection such as HIV. The condom is safe if used correctly, see [question 24](#), and you can easily buy condoms, in drugstores, pharmacies or online. You should always talk to your partner about contraception before you have sex for the first time.

There are different contraceptives for girls and women. To find out which one is best, she can talk to her gynaecologist. You can also go to the gynaecologist together and find out about the different options. There are also counselling centres that offer contraceptive advice. If you wish, you can get free advice there anonymously, that means you don't have to give your name (see addresses). Some counselling centres also offer free access to contraceptives.

One method that is completely unsuitable for preventing pregnancy is "pulling out" (so-called "coitus interruptus"), in which the penis is pulled out of the vagina shortly before the man's orgasm. Sperm can already be on its way before the orgasm. Anal intercourse with a girl (penis in the anus) without a condom can also lead to pregnancy because semen can flow from the anus into the neighbouring vagina.



Condoms and co.

24. How do you use a condom correctly?

1. Remove the condom from the packaging. Carefully tear open the condom wrapper at the side, then remove the condom.
2. Hold the penis firmly and pull back the foreskin. The condom and penis only fit together when the penis is stiff. Pull back the foreskin if the penis is not circumcised.
3. Put on the condom and push out the air. Put the condom on so that the "roll" is on the outside and push the air out of the "tip".
4. Hold it with one hand and unroll it with the other. Unroll the condom all the way to the base of the penis. Do not pull! If this does not work, try again with a new condom.
5. Continue to unroll all the way down. Lubricant should be used for anal sex. Lubricant can also be helpful for vaginal sex, especially if the vagina is not wet enough.
6. This is what to do after ejaculation: Pull the penis out with the condom before it goes limp. The condom belongs in the rubbish, not the toilet! Wash



the penis and hands well afterwards. [i]

7. If you're not that experienced, it's best to practise a few times on your own, then you'll feel more confident when the time comes.

<https://www.zanzu.de/en/family-planning-and-pregnancy/contraception/condom/>

[i] *Ein Kondom überziehen*, abgerufen am 18.07.2019, von

www.liebesleben.de/fuer-alle/kondome/anwendung/

25. How can you keep the condom from tearing or breaking?

When used correctly, condoms protect against unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections!

The condom should always still be safe to use (the date is written on the package) and its packaging has to be intact.

Condoms come in different sizes. A condom that is too tight can burst, one that is too big can slip off during sex.

Condoms must only be used once! Be careful when tearing them open, especially if you have long fingernails or rings. Do not use scissors, knives or other sharp objects to open the packaging.

Condoms do not tolerate heat or direct sunlight.

Condoms should not be kept in a wallet or trouser pocket because they could be damaged there.

Condoms do not tolerate products containing grease or oil. Do not use creams, lotions or Vaseline. There are water-based lubricants that you can buy at the drugstore or pharmacy.



Do not use two condoms on top of each other! They rub against each other and will break more easily.

26. What can you do in case of an unwanted pregnancy?



If contraception has failed, the “morning-after pill” can help to avoid an unwanted pregnancy. The pill should be taken as soon as possible, preferably within the first 12 hours after sexual intercourse. After that, the effectiveness of the morning-after pill decreases until it no longer helps at all. You can buy this medication at the pharmacy, even without a prescription. However, girls under the age of 14 need their parents’ consent. If the girl is between 14 and 18 years old and does not have a doctor’s prescription, the pharmacist will discuss with the girl whether to dispense the medication or not. The morning-after pill costs between 16 and 35 euros without a prescription.

If you have any problems or questions, gynaecologists or family planning centres are available to help.

If you have waited too long and are not getting your period, you should take a pregnancy test. The young woman can do this either at her gynaecologist’s, at a family planning centre or she can go to the health department.

If the pregnancy is confirmed and the woman is considering terminating the pregnancy, she should visit a so-called pregnancy conflict counselling centre. All further steps will be discussed there. It is desirable that the young man stands by his partner during this process and also accompanies her if she wants him to do so.



Healthy sex

27. What is the difference between HIV and AIDS? 

HIV is the virus that can cause the disease AIDS.

HIV is the abbreviation of the English term **H**uman **I**mmunodeficiency **V**irus.

This means that the HI virus weakens the body's own defences. For example, people can contract the virus during sex with someone who carries HI viruses in their body.


AIDS is the most advanced stage of the infection.

Acquired: Acquired through infection.

Immune Deficiency: Weakness of the immune system.

Syndromes: Various signs of illness at once.

AIDS is the result of an HIV infection if the infection is not recognised in time by taking an HIV test and treated accordingly. At that point, the HI virus has weakened the body's own defence system to such an extent that it is difficult for the body to fight infections and certain types of cancer. This can lead to life-threatening diseases. Today, however, there are drugs that can prevent the disease from breaking out and a person from passing on the infection. An HIV-positive person must take these drugs for the rest of their life. So far, a cure for HIV infection has not been found.



28. How do you protect yourself from HIV/AIDS?



HIV is relatively difficult to transmit: there is only a risk of infection when bodily fluids that contain high levels of the virus come into contact with wounds or mucous membranes of the body. These fluids include, above all, blood, semen, vaginal fluid or the fluid film on the mucous membrane of the rectum of people with an HIV infection who are not taking medication against HIV.

Most people become infected with HIV during sexual intercourse without a condom.

The risk of transmission of HIV as well as other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) is high during anal (penetration of the anus by the penis) or vaginal sexual intercourse (penetration of the vagina). You can protect yourself and your partner from getting STIs by using a condom. This is especially important if you change partners frequently and don't know each other very well. Some people also take HIV medication as a precaution to protect themselves from infection if they have sex without a condom. However, you should only take this pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) in consultation with a doctor. These drugs are much more expensive than condoms and can have side effects.

HIV is not transmitted during the exchange of affectionate touch such as kissing and petting (sexual acts without penetration of the penis into the anus or vagina).

The risk of transmission is also very low during oral sex (sex using the mouth). To avoid any risk, sperm or menstrual blood should not be ingested.

Additionally, many couples who start out having protected sex (with a condom) get to know each other first and take an HIV test before having unprotected sex with each other. However, for this to be effective, it is important



that they do not have unprotected sex outside of this relationship.

There is a high risk when syringes are shared. People who inject drugs should only ever use their own syringes and never share them with others.

Similarly, personal hygiene items such as shaving equipment or toothbrushes should never be shared with others.

29. Can you get HIV when you drink from a cup? 

No, when you drink from the same cup or glass as someone with HIV you cannot contract the virus. Saliva does not contain enough viruses for you to get the infection.


30. Is oral sex more dangerous for the man? 

No, oral sex is not more dangerous for the man than it is for the woman. The risk of contracting HIV from oral sex is low for both, see [question 28](#).

If you want to be completely sure, avoid ingesting sperm and menstrual blood.

31. Can HIV be transmitted via the mouth? 

Yes, there is a small chance of transmission when sperm or menstrual blood is ingested. However, the virus can't be transmitted when kissing someone that has the virus. Saliva is not contagious.

32. Can I contract the infection from an HIV-positive woman? 



Yes, you can contract the virus from an HIV-infected person during unprotected anal or vaginal sexual intercourse (without condoms). Women can also get the virus from HIV-positive men. You cannot tell if a person is HIV-positive by just looking at them.

33. Can you get HIV even when you use a condom?

This happens very rarely, but it is possible if the condom breaks or gets stuck in the woman's vagina. When the vaginal mucosa then comes into contact with sperm, there is a risk of infection. It is important to note that this can happen not only to the woman if the man is HIV-positive. The man can also become infected if the woman is HIV-positive.

34. Are you infected with HIV every time you come into contact with blood?

Several conditions must be met before you can become infected:

- The person whose blood you come into contact with must be HIV-positive.
- There needs to be a sufficient level of virus in the blood of the HIV-positive person for there to be a possibility of infection. If this person takes medication against HIV, the amount of virus in their blood (viral load) can drop low enough so that they are no longer infectious.
- The HI virus must be able to enter the bloodstream of the person who is not yet infected. This can happen through contact with mucous membranes and wounds. Uninjured skin such as on the hand or arms however, offers no possibility of infection.



35. Can you get infected if an HIV-positive person bites you?



This is extremely unlikely as long as the person biting you does not bleed and there is no blood exchange with them. The amount of HIV viruses in the saliva is so small that no HIV transmission into the wound of the person bitten can occur.

36. Can a baby become infected if the mother is HIV-positive?



Yes, the baby can be infected by the mother, especially during birth and breastfeeding. In the womb, it is largely protected because it has its own blood circulation. If it turns out during the prenatal care examinations that the pregnant woman is HIV-positive, steps are taken to ensure that the child will not become infected. This includes the pregnant woman taking HIV-specific medication during pregnancy and not breastfeeding after birth. The infant also receives HIV-specific medication shortly before birth and in the first weeks of life. The birth should take place in a specialised clinic. The child can be born by caesarean section and also by natural birth. Almost 100 percent of the children are then born healthy.

37. Can you sense if you have HIV?



No. Only an HIV test gives certainty. Many people do not feel any signs of illness after an HIV infection. Some feel sick as if they had the flu. If you think you might be infected, you should go to a counselling centre (e.g. health department) and clarify the possibility of an infection. This is done in a conversation with a counsellor and a subsequent HIV test.



38. How does an HIV infection progress?

If a person is infected with HIV and does not take medication against the virus, the viruses destroy their immune system over several years to such an extent that the body can no longer defend itself against diseases and they die of AIDS. This now rarely happens in Germany, because there are effective drugs that can prevent an outbreak of the disease. Therefore, it is important that an infection is detected as early as possible by taking an HIV test.

Without medical treatment, the following happens: Shortly after infection, some people have symptoms that feel like the flu. However, many do not notice anything at all. During these first weeks, people are very contagious (the acute phase). After that, people get better again and most have no signs of illness. This can go on for about ten years (the latent phase). At some point, infections occur more often than in people without HIV. This can manifest as weight loss, diarrhoea, coughing, skin problems or long-lasting fever (the symptomatic phase). If treatment is still not started, the next phase is called AIDS. This is when severe diseases of the nervous system or even cancer occur, which are no longer treatable and lead to death.

39. What are the symptoms of AIDS?

HIV infection weakens a person's immune system to such an extent that they become increasingly susceptible to other pathogens such as bacteria or viruses, which can also make other people without HIV ill. Certain types of tumours can develop as well. Only an HIV test can give definitive information about whether a person is infected with HIV or not. And only a doctor can diagnose AIDS.

40. How does an AIDS infection progress?



Many people confuse an HIV infection with AIDS. You cannot become infected with AIDS, because it is the result of an infection with the HI virus (HIV) that is not diagnosed and treated in time. (You can read about the course of an HIV infection in [question 38](#)).

41. Is AIDS a dangerous disease or is it treatable? 

AIDS is the result of an untreated HIV infection. It is a very dangerous disease because you can die from it. Nowadays, however, no one in Germany has to develop AIDS and die. If someone is infected with HIV, there is very good medication. It fights the HI viruses and prevents the outbreak of AIDS. As long as you always take these drugs, you can live well despite the HIV infection.

Even if people have reached the AIDS stage, they can be helped in many cases.

42. How does the HIV/AIDS treatment work? 

In Germany, there are doctors who specialise in treating people with HIV infections. They work in HIV specialist practices or HIV clinics. They decide when to start treatment for HIV. There are special medicines to fight the HI virus (HIV). They are called antiretroviral drugs and prevent the virus from multiplying in the body. These drugs must be taken for the rest of the person's life, otherwise the viruses will start multiplying again and start attacking the immune system.

43. Can HIV/AIDS be cured with medication? 



So far, a cure for HIV infection has not been found. However, if the infection is detected through an HIV test, there is very good medication available. These drugs prevent the spread of the virus in the body and damage to the immune system and associated diseases, see also [question 38](#) and [question 42](#).


44. Is the disease widespread in Germany? What percentage?

No, fortunately the disease is not very widespread in Germany. This is also due to the fact that there is a lot of education about this topic. A total of 82.7 (2017) million people live in Germany. Of these, an estimated 86,000 (2017) people are HIV-positive, i.e. infected with HIV.[i] This corresponds to approximately 0.1% of the population. It is important to note, however, that an HIV infection only leads to illness if it is not diagnosed and treated. The number of people in Germany who become ill as a result of HIV is therefore extremely low.

[i] Robert Koch Institut: *HIV/AIDS in Deutschland – Änderung der Eckdaten der Schätzung, 2017*

45. Where can you take an HIV test?

If you want to take an HIV test or are unsure whether you have another sexually transmitted infection, you can go to the public health department or to a counselling centre. You can find some addresses below. Tests are done anonymously with counselling, so no one will know your name. You can also go to a doctor's practice, but the test there is not anonymous. You can now also buy an HIV test at a pharmacy, counselling centre or online and do it on your own at home. However, counselling services can be very helpful and should therefore be taken advantage of. If the test result is positive (meaning that you are indeed infected), you have to take another test to see if the



first result was correct.

You can find a counselling centre near you here: www.hivandmore.de/hiv-test/teststellen.

[Youth 4 Youth](#) [Mädchenfragen](#) [Jungsfragen](#) [Der Zyklus](#) [Beratungsstellen](#)
[Links](#) [Über das Projekt](#) [Cookie-Richtlinie \(EU\)](#)

© Verband für Interkulturelle Arbeit (VIA) Regionalverband Berlin/ Brandenburg e. V. 2019 |

[Kontakt](#) | [Impressum](#) | [Datenschutz](#) | [Cookie-Richtlinie \(EU\)](#)

