

One-to-one chat canned answer scripts:

All chats start with automated into:

INTRO: Hi. This is the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) National Help Center. I'm a peer support volunteer, and everything we talk about is confidential. To help the conversation, can you tell me your age, the country you're contacting us from and if you feel comfortable; the gender you identify as. Also, please note that if you are using a mobile device or have unstable wi-fi internet connection, it is possible that may cause this chat session to stop working. If that should happen, please wait a few minutes and restart a new chat. Thanks!

Canned Answers:

-3 Things We Do:

We provide three main services: First we answer factual questions about gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender issues. Second, we maintain information on local resources throughout the US and Canada (and some internationally). And third, we provide peer support if someone is going through a difficult time, and just need to chat for a few minutes. How can I help you?

-Coming Out: Born LGB...:

It might help to know that just about all mainstream experts on human sexuality believe that someone's sexual orientation, regardless of whether it's gay, straight, bi, or pan is something that forms in a person's life before they are born, or within the first few years of a person's life. Sexual orientation forms way before a person is making conscious decisions about anything. Being lesbian, gay, bi, or pan may not be as common as being straight, but they are just as normal.

No one chooses their sexuality, it is just part of who they are. It is a normal and natural part of who a person is.

-Coming Out: Born Transgender:

It might help to know that just about all mainstream experts on gender identity believe that a person's gender identity, regardless of being transgender or cisgender is something that forms in each person before we are born or in the first few years of a person's life, long before any conscious decisions are made. While being transgender, genderqueer, or nonbinary may not be as common as identifying as cisgender, they are just as normal and natural identities.

-Coming Out: How do you know? -Sexuality:

When someone is trying to understand what their sexual orientation is, it can help to focus on long-term feelings and attractions, rather than on events that might have happened. So if you're trying to figure something out, it can help to think about how long you've had feelings for people of the same gender...how strong those feelings are...how those feelings compare to feelings for someone of another gender. Over time, you might get a better understanding of what your feelings mean for you.

-Coming Out: How do you know – Gender:

When someone is trying to understand their gender identity it can help to focus on long-term feelings and you feel about your identity NOT what other people may say or believe. Do you feel comfortable being referred to as a boy/man or girl/woman or other terms? It's ok not to be sure, but it's something you can think about. How do you feel in your body? Does the outside of your body line up with how you feel on the inside?

-Safer Sex: Lots of STI's:

When we talk about safer-sex information here, we are focusing specifically on HIV risk, since that's the most serious type of sexually transmitted infection (STI), but it isn't the *only* one, so this information is just about HIV transmission.

-Safer Sex: General Overview:

The way that HIV can transmit is by getting certain very specific fluids from one person's body directly into another person. The fluids you have to be most concerned about are blood, semen (cum), maybe pre-cum, and vaginal fluids.

-Safer Sex: Always Assume HIV+:

If you're going to be with anyone, the safest thing to do is always assume that it's possible that the person you are with "might" have been exposed to HIV at some point in the past, and protect yourself based on that possibility. That way you won't have to guess about the other person.

-Safer Sex: PrEP – Taken Before Exposure:

PrEP is a drug that may be called Trueda, or Descovy that requires a prescription and a very specific dosing schedule. When taken properly, it is highly effective against getting infected with HIV. But it does NOT protect people from other STI's (sexually transmitted infections) or pregnancy, so it should be used along with condoms. When someone first starts taking PrEP, it take about seven days before it builds up enough in your system to be effective in preventing HIV infection. When you stop taking PrEP, you are long longer protected. The Long-term effects of taking PrEP are not known and it's important to talk with a knowledgeable doctor find out if it might be an option for you.

-Safer Sex: PEP – Taken After Exposure:

If you have been exposed to HIV within the past 72 hours (3 days), you should seek medical attention ASAP to determine if PEP can be used to lower the risk of becoming infected with HIV. PEP is not an option after 72 hours.

-Safer Sex: Window Period:

It can take up to three months before someone can get an accurate result on an HIV anti-body test, which is the type of test we recommend. So you should try to wait as close to three months as possible before getting tested.

-Safer Sex: Test Results:

If someone has a negative result on their HIV anti-body test, that's great news. But it's also important not to use good news as a reason to start putting yourself at risk. An HIV test result might not register anything that happened in the three months before the person was tested, and it certainly doesn't measure anything that happened "after" they were tested. We suggest that people be as safe with each other each time, even if they are with the same person on a regular basis.

-Safer Sex: Receiving Oral Sex:

If someone is receiving oral sex, then they are just coming into contact with the other person's mouth, and we know that saliva does not transmit HIV. We've never seen any cases of anyone getting HIV by receiving oral sex.

-Safer Sex: Performing oral sex on a person with a penis:

If you are performing oral sex on a person with a penis, it is important not to get that person's semen into your mouth. One way is to talk to the person beforehand and let them know that you don't want them to cum into your mouth, and the likelihood of getting HIV just from pre-cum is very low. We are not aware of it ever happening.

If you want to be even safer than that, you can have them wear a condom when you're performing oral sex on them.

-Safer Sex: Anal Sex:

Anal sex is considered to be one of the riskiest ways of transmitting HIV, and the risk is same for both partners. It is really important to use a condom every single time. Not everyone has anal sex, so you will need to decide if it's something that you want to do. If it is, then using a condom is **really** important. And you want to use a condom every time. There are three things to remember about condoms: 1. Make Sure you are using a new package of condoms. 2. Make sure the condoms are made of latex 3. Use a lot of water-based lubricant like KY Jelly. If do these things, than you will substantially **reduce** the risk of transmitting HIV, but it won't eliminate the risk completely. But it will make it **much** safer than using no protection at all. In addition to condoms there is not an option called PrEP, which is a prescription drug that must be taken on a specific schedule that when taken properly is highly effective against getting infected with HIV. But it does NOT protect people from other STI's (sexually transmitted infections) or pregnancy, so it should be used along with condoms.

-Safer Sex: Performing oral sex on a person with a vagina:

It is considered a theoretical risk to transmit HIV through oral contact with a vagina, which means that medically it is possible to transmit HIV this way. However we don't really see it happening. If you want to reduce whatever risk there might be, you can use a latex barrier between the vagina and your mouth so that the fluids don't get inside. Barriers that you can use would be a dental dam or cut open a latex condom or latex glove.

-Religion:

Everyone is entitled to their own personal religious beliefs. We live in a world where there are religions and beliefs that see LGBTQ people as negative and there are those who embrace LGBTQ people with open arms. We are so sorry if someone has ever used religion or their faith to make you feel little, worthless or bad for who you are.

It is important to understand that each person is free to follow their own beliefs and faith. A person does not need to follow the doctrines or faith of anyone else's religions even if it is their parents or family's. Your faith is yours and your alone.

-Religion – Bible/Religious Text:

We are not able to get into any specifics of what any given religion believes, and we can't get into a debate about any texts or passages which speak about LGBT-related topics.

Religious texts from any religion can be seen as historical documents and products of a certain time and place. Many religious text have been translated or edited over several thousands of years by different sects and congregations, so there can be many different viewpoints. If you're looking to delve into a discussion about specifics we can do a research search to see if there are any local congregations in your area that you can talk with.

-Transgender – General info:

Someone who is transgender is coming to understand or knows that the gender they are "on the inside" does not match the wrong gender that shows up on the outside of their body. How they look on the outside or how they dress does not determine their gender, it's how they understand themselves to be on the inside.

-Transgender – Transitioning:

There can be a lot of different means for transitioning as it's a very personal. Transitioning is can be the process that a transgender person goes through feel more comfortable in their own body and/or appear more as the gender they know themselves to truly be. There is no rule book on how to transition as it can very greatly from person to person. For some part of transitioning may be using the correct pronouns for themselves or using a name they feel better identifies them. Some people transition by changing the clothes they wear or the way they wear their hair. Or by using (or not using) makeup or products. Other people might choose to make more of a physical change in their appearance by working with a knowledgeable doctor for hormone replacement treatments (HRT). Depending on the individual, hormones can change the texture of the skin, can alter where and how hair grows and may have an effect on voice. And a very small percentage of people might have gender-affirmation surgery which may include top or bottom surgery. This is not done often because of the significant cost involved. Some people may do one or more, or different aspects as they come to understand their gender identity. For some transitioning can mean, coming to understand what their gender is, and claiming that identity without making any changes and that's valid too.

-Nonbinary- Identity:

Nonbinary can be an umbrella term for gender identities that are neither male or female, identities outside the gender binary. For some people nonbinary identities can fall under the transgender umbrella but others may see it as separate and both are valid when a person uses the identity for themselves. Other terms can be genderqueer, genderfluid, third gender, and many others. A person who is nonbinary may see their gender a mix of more than one gender or they might see it separate of the binary ideas of male or female.