Dear Alice,

Is it possible to get AIDS from a handjob?

?Don't know what's safe anymore

Answer

Dear Don't know what's safe anymore,

To become infected through a handjob, while theoretically possible, would be a most unlikely event. HIV transmission [2] can only occur when any of the following four fluids from an HIV infected person find their way into a non-infected person?s body via mucous membranes (eyes, mouth, vagina, anus) or into the blood stream via an open sore or cut. The fluids are:

- Blood
- Breast Milk
- Semen
- Vaginal secretions

Unbroken skin is protective ? the virus cannot live on the surface of the skin, so undamaged skin touching infected semen will not pick up the virus. The possibility really only exists if the person giving the handjob has an open cut or wound on her or his hand that comes in contact with infected semen or vaginal secretions. If the giver of the handjob knows that they have a cut or sore, use a condom and some lubrication for the handjob to be completely safe. Also, remember that even this minimal risk only exists if the partner you are masturbating is HIV positive.

There are slight risks of transmitting other STIs besides HIV through a handjob, especially if you touch your partner?s genitals, and then touch your own, or if you share toys. STIs such as pubic lice (crabs) [3], HPV [4], gonorrhea [5], herpes [6], and chlamydia [7] may be transmitted through mutual masturbation [8], but the risk is still very low. So be sure to wash hands and toys thoroughly after ?handling? your partner?s fluids and before touching your own. And vice a versa!

You can contact your local health department if you need additional information or to find a STI testing center near you.
High five,

Alice!

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Sexual & Reproductive Health [9]
Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's) [10]

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