

I use crack (or other stimulants). What can I do to protect myself from infection?

If you smoke crack:

- Use a mouthpiece to prevent burns from the crack pipe.
 - You can make a mouthpiece from a rubber spark plug cover/boot (available at local auto supply store), or rubber bands. Place either item on the mouth end of the pipe to act as a barrier between your lips and the hot metal or glass. Also, glass pipes are usually cooler than metal.
 - If you don't have a mouthpiece, let the pipe cool down before you take your next hit.
 - Using a longer pipe will cause less burns, as the temperature will be lower.
- Avoid using a cracked pipe, as cuts are a way for bacteria & viruses to get into your body.
- Don't share your mouthpiece/pipe or use anyone else's. If you do, clean it with bleach or alcohol first.
- If you don't have a mouthpiece, use petroleum jelly or lip balm to protect your lips when smoking.
- Craft a screen for your crack pipe from a small piece of household copper scrubbing pad. Mold it to fit your pipe, and change it often to prevent it from becoming brittle and burning your mouth.



If you have sex while on crack:

- Use condoms. Ask us about getting some today.
- If you can't use condoms, use plenty of water-based lube to reduce your risk.
- Apply a drop of lube inside the tip of the condom to make it feel more natural.
- Use condoms and dental dams / plastic wrap for oral sex:
 - If you have burns on your lips, cuts on your lips, or the roof of your mouth is irritated from smoking crack, avoid giving oral sex without a condom - flavored condoms are a nice option.
 - If you do give oral sex without a condom, it is best for your partner not to come in your mouth. This will help you avoid HIV and other STIs.

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If you inject crack:

- Use new syringes - one shot for each sterile syringe - as well as new cookers, cotton filters and water. If you can't get new syringes, either from your local syringe/needle exchange or pharmacy, clean your syringes well with room-temperature water or bleach, flushing them at least three times.
- Prepare your shot on a clean surface, an unread section of newspaper or magazine will work.
- Try to cook the crack at least 15 seconds to prevent infection.
- To protect your veins, use pure ascorbic acid to dissolve crack for injection, rather than vinegar or lemon juice. Using lemon juice can cause serious eye problems.
 - Ask your local needle/syringe exchange if they have this for you.
 - You can also try crushing the crack between two spoons to turn it into a powder.
- If you do inject, ask for our Safer Injection Flyer, or see the safer injection guide complete with pictures from CRA @ <http://www.anypositivechange.org/bvcsi.html>



If you use crystal:

- Avoid mixing it with poppers and/or Viagra, since mixing these drugs can cause overdose and heart attacks.
- Plan ahead, and have plenty of condoms and water-based lube on hand if you are going to have sex.
- If you are injecting, rotate your injection site, as crystal causes your veins to shrink.
- Drink plenty of water for healthy veins and to avoid dehydration.
- Do not muscle or skin-pop cocaine or crystal, due to the risk of abscesses.
- See our Safer Injection Flyer for more information.



If you snort cocaine or other drugs:

- Avoid sharing straws or tubes to snort cocaine or other drugs, as this can spread Hepatitis B or C.
- If you do share straws or tubes, clean them with bleach or alcohol first.