

**GET
INFECT
UP**



Women Working with Women

Acknowledgement

Demystifying myths and misconceptions was far easier than illustrating it but we must acknowledge that it is internally challenging but rewarding. While creating this comic book we realize that in dealing with HIV, a lot of misconceptions and myths have been perpetuated and we need to be able to tell reality from myth and the intention was to be able to communicate in a simple yet interesting way so as to curb the stigma and discrimination that leads to fear, avoidance, denial and damage to one's health.

We realized that the Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer women have long been overlooked in HIV prevention measures on the assumption that their sexual activities pose lower risks to HIV infection. However, putting in to consideration the risky sexual behaviors that they may engage in during sex and sexual activities HIV prevention and infection should be a matter the community needs to have conversations about. Correct information is key to understanding and preventing HIV. This publication by Women Working with Women (3W) is therefore developed on the need to demystify myths and misconceptions around HIV/AIDS and other STI infections among LBQ women and the need to have sufficient information and create awareness on HIV in relation to LBQ women.

This work could not have been possible without the financial support and assistance from COC Nederland's. We would like to express our deep appreciation for their continued support to ensure we contribute to the global action towards zero stigma and discrimination to persons living with HIV/AIDS

Special appreciation to staff members of 3W and the creative team who dedicated their time in coming up with the content during brainstorming on ideas for the booklet. A big thank you to Ozone for coming up with the beautiful illustrations and cover design that communicates the message of this publication. We would like to give a special shout out and appreciation to the Lesbian Bisexual, Queer women in Kisumu County for their continuous support and belief in 3W's interventions towards a society embracing justice, freedom and equity.





HIV/AIDS is a condition, not a punishment from God to the LBOs! Anyone can be infected with HIV regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, we need to accept the infected LBOs as they are.

Ooh God
why this
punishment!



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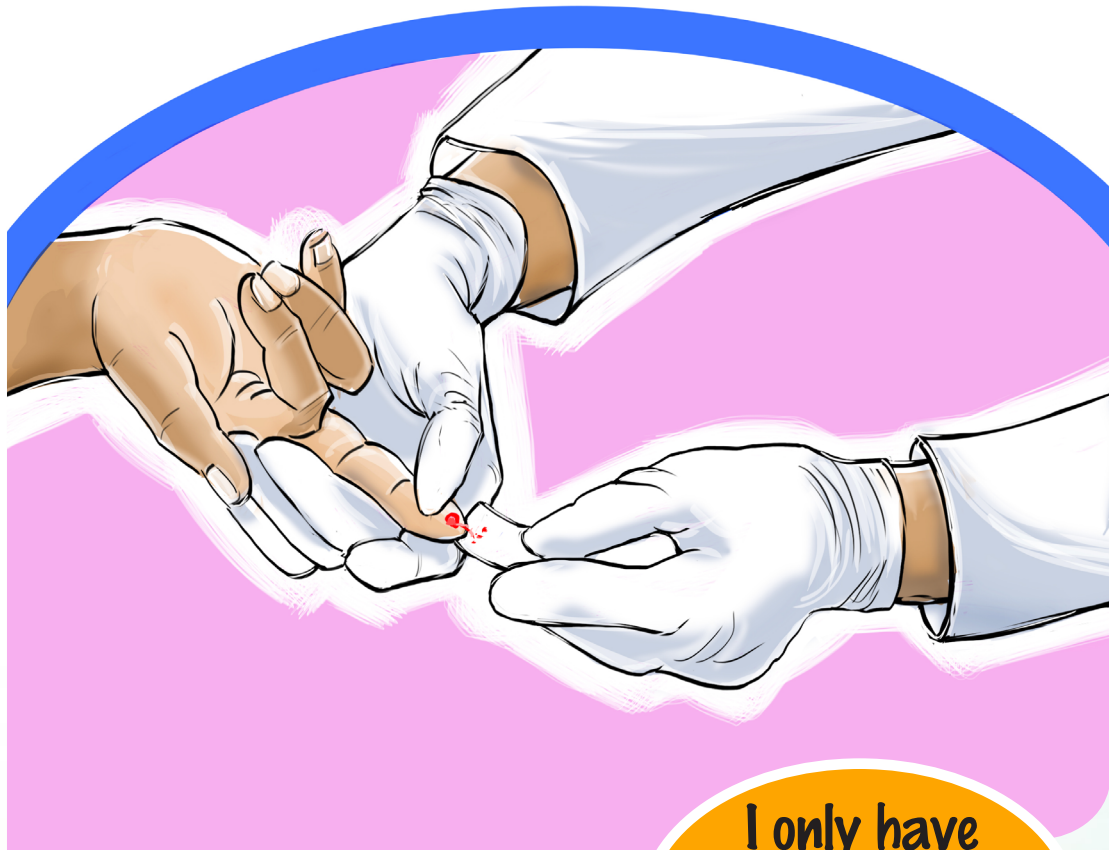


**Babe, let's
explore our sex
toys, I use yours,
you use mine**

Sharing unprotected sex toys
with an infected LBO persons
puts you at risk of HIV infection
and other STI'S.



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LBO persons are assumed to be at low risk of contracting HIV, do not assume your status, go for frequent HIV test and encourage your partner to go with you.

I only have sex with women, why should I test for HIV



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Most bisexuals are considered to be the ones spreading the HIV Virus. Fact is that having multiple sexual partners puts you at a high risk of contracting HIV and other STI's

I love my boyfriend but I really like my best friends girlfriend, her masculinity draws me to her





HIV is not spread through kissing, you will require more than 20 litres of saliva

This is a fact, however, deep open mouth kissing with an infected persons, where both partners have sores or bleeding gums may allow for the blood from the infected persons to get into the bloodstream of the HIV negative partner

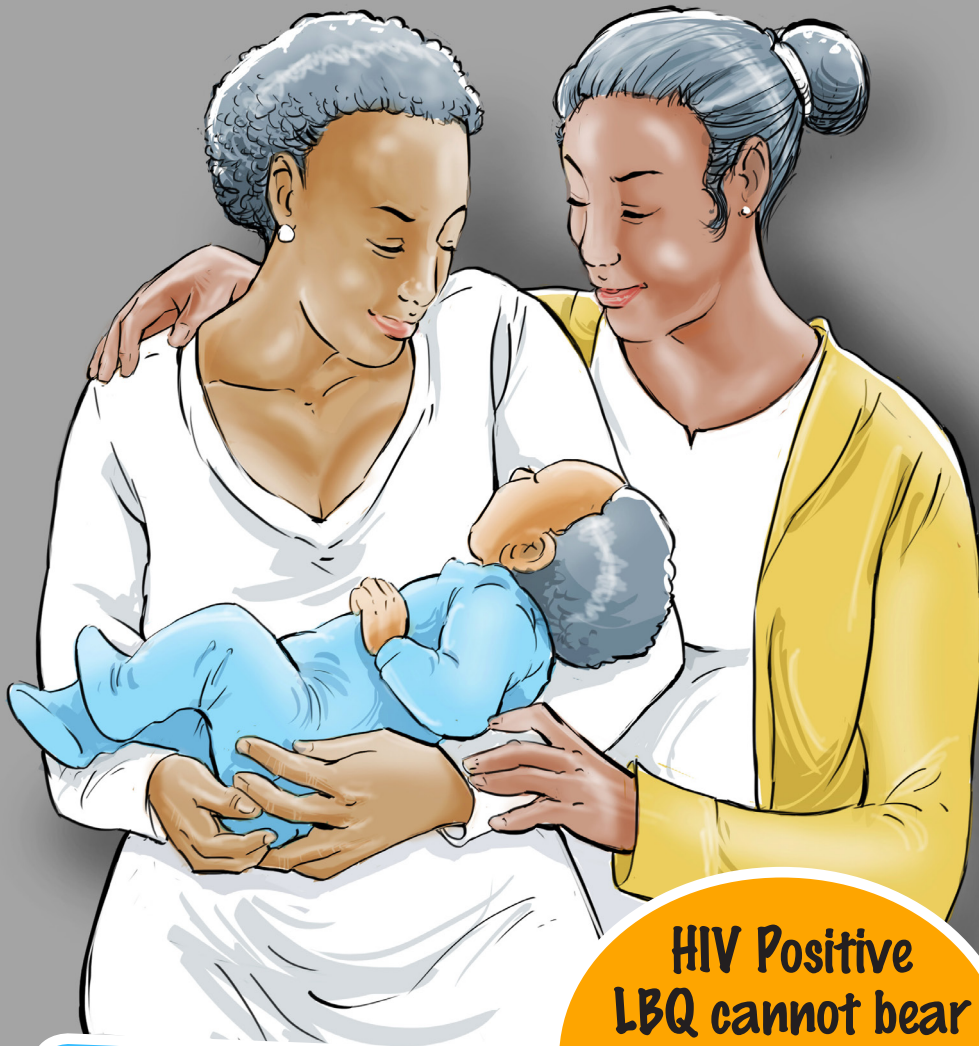




Why should i go for regular medical check-ups and am not at risk of contracting HIV?

Regular check-ups are important to the LBO persons because it can help discover potential/real health issues before they become a problem, the doctor is also able to detect diseases and health conditions including HIV early.





Antenatal, perinatal and post-natal transmission which includes breast feeding is possible but your HIV status doesn't and should not limit a HIV + LBQ person from bearing children or raising a family.

**HIV Positive
LBQ cannot bear
children, neither
can they raise a
family**



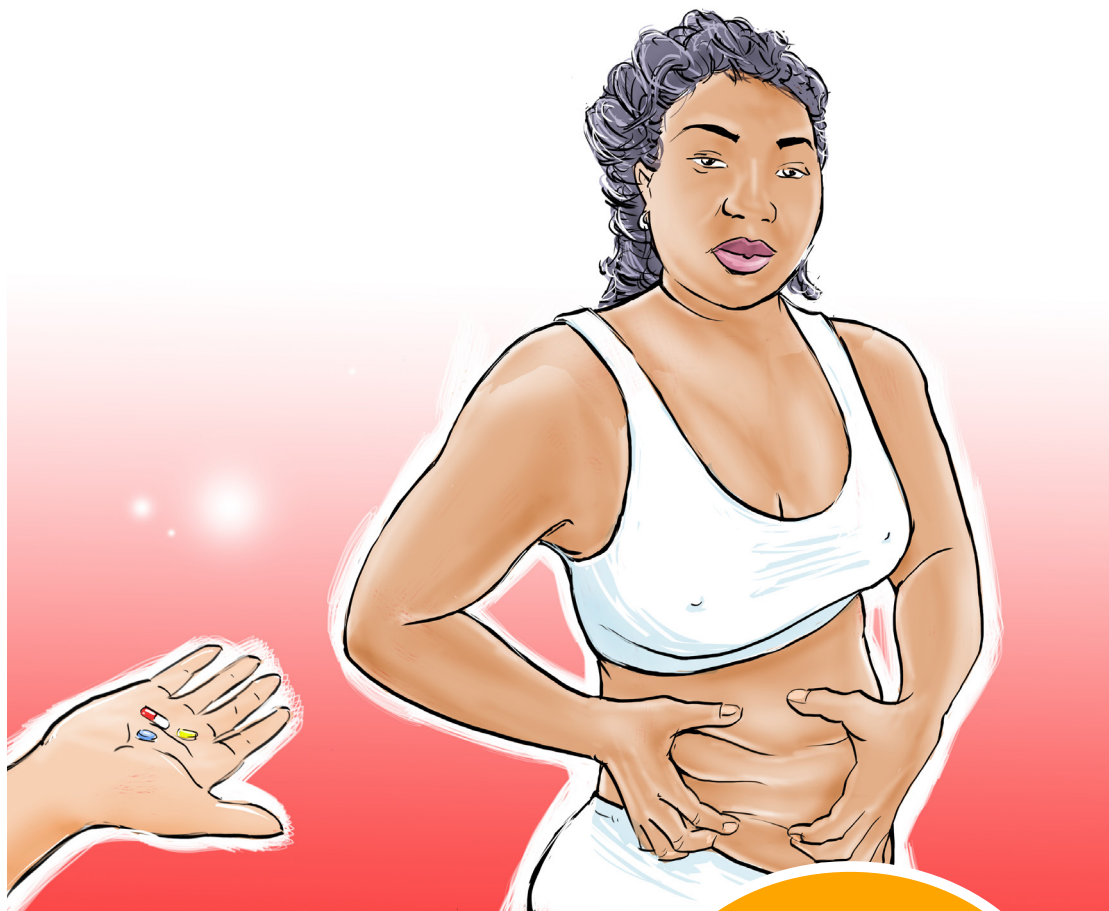
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**How did I
infect all these
knowledgeable
career women**

HIV can be transmitted by anyone who comes into direct contact with certain body fluids of a person with HIV whose viral load is detectable regardless of their age, race, sexual orientation, career and/or status in the society. Your profession does not determine your HIV status and vice versa, neither does it hinder you from following any career path.



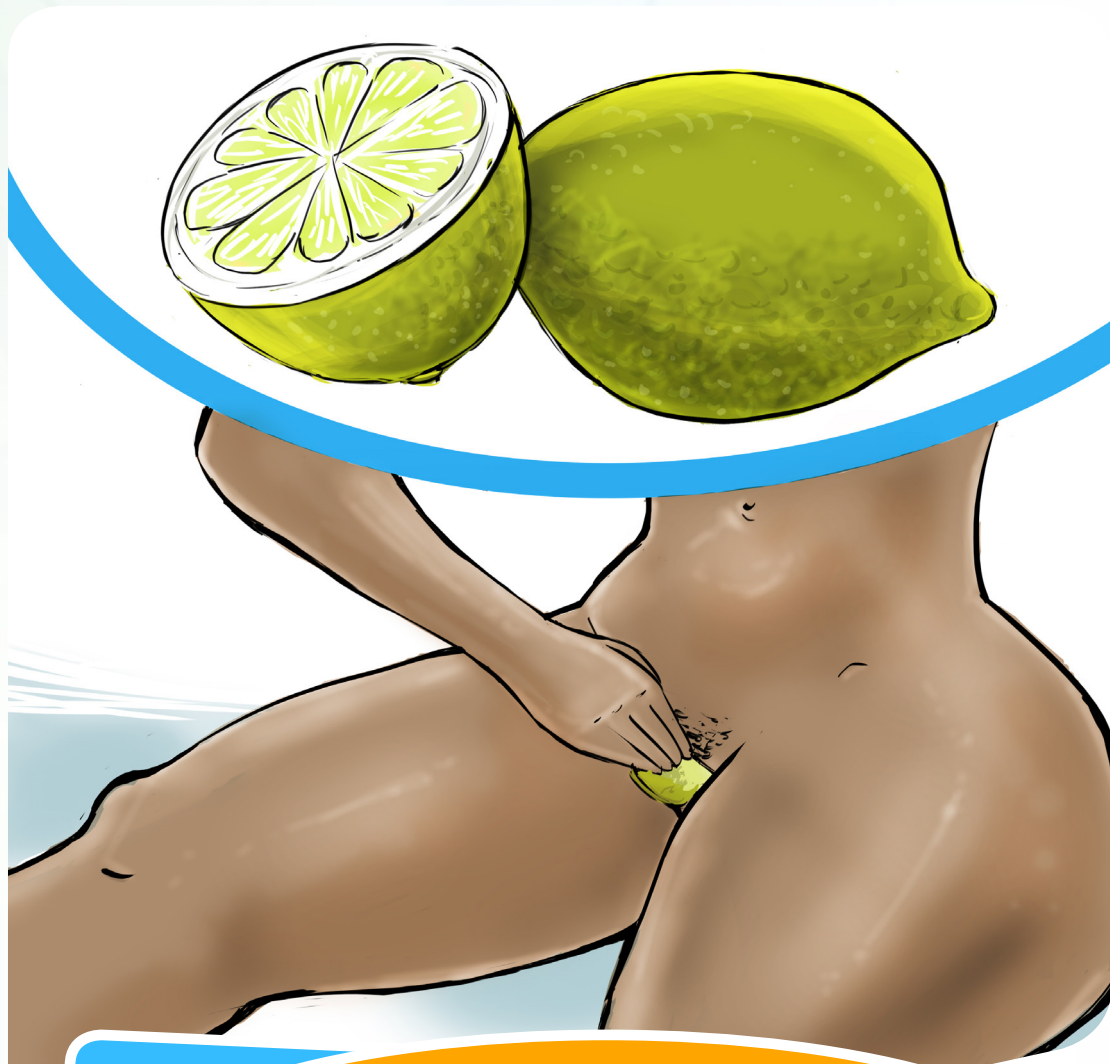


Do not assume the HIV status of your partner by how they look, endeavour to test and know their HIV status before involving in any sexual contact.

She cannot be on ARV'S can't they see how healthy she looks.



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**Alice told me she uses lemon to
cleanses her vagina before and after sexual
intercourse, that way she has been safe
from STI's and HIV**

Nothing should go in the vagina. Period!



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I keep losing weight and my viral load is high, maybe I should visit a witchdoctor to cure me from this illness

HIV viral load can only be suppressed to an undetectable levels by adhering to ART, this can only be achieved by taking the HIV treatment as prescribed, receiving other medical support and regular medical visits to monitor viral load to make sure it stays undetectable.



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LBO persons have different sexual practices apart from fingering like scissoring/tribadism during sex which needs to be viewed with the same caution as other modes of HIV transmission.

But why are people being all dramatic about safe sex! Like fingers can cause HIV!





Other modes of HIV transmission



Less common ways are:

- From mother to child during pregnancy, birth, or breastfeeding when on ARTs.
- Getting stuck with an HIV-contaminated needle or other sharp object. This is a risk mainly for health care workers. The risk is very low but not for injecting drug users (IDU'S)

HIV is spread only in extremely rare cases by:

- Having oral sex. But in general, the chance that an HIV-negative person will get HIV from oral sex with an HIV-positive partner is extremely low.
- Receiving blood transfusions, blood products, or organ/tissue transplants that are contaminated with HIV
- Contact between broken skin, wounds, or mucous membranes and HIV-infected blood or blood-contaminated body fluids.
- Eating food that has been pre-chewed by a person with HIV. The contamination occurs when infected blood from a caregiver's mouth mixes with food while chewing. The only known cases are among infants.

Sources

<https://www.hhs.gov/opa/reproductive-health/fact-sheets/sexually-transmitted-diseases/hiv/index.html>

<https://3wkenya.org › event › improved-srhr-and-fewer-hiv-infections-for-lb...>





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