



Haemosexual
Hsgw026Xn8J



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Is anybody there?

Have you ever thought you are the only man with a bleeding disorder who thinks about, has had or wants to have sex with men? Well, that is not the case and you are certainly not alone.

Research suggests there are approximately 10,000 men living with a bleeding disorder in the UK, with approximately 800+ having had some form of sexual encounter with another man.

This publication has been compiled by gay men with haemophilia, experts and medical professionals. With no other support or information available for people with bleeding disorders, we wanted to share our knowledge and experience in a more open and less clinical manner. Along with providing advice on sexual health matters, we hope to offer support and friendship to enable you to make informed decisions about your life and the future.

If you would like to talk to someone this can be arranged and contact details can be found at the back of this booklet or through the Haemosexual website.

For more detailed information on these and other subjects not covered in this booklet please go to www.haemosexual.co.uk

Planning for your future

You might have had some experience in the past with friends like watching pornography, touching, using websites or apps on mobile devices. Going to a gay club or pub for the first time to meet men can be quite daunting so it's important to think about what you want to do before you go out onto the scene.

If you are worried about going out on your own, contact the Lesbian and Gay Switchboard who can put you in touch with local groups who will be able to support and help you. The number is at the back of this booklet.

Haemophilia Centre Staff Support

You may have been attending the same Haemophilia Unit for many years and so talking to centre staff can be awkward. Some staff at your centre may feel uncomfortable about discussing sexual issues with you. This may be because they do not feel sufficiently informed or trained to do so. However, they can refer you to someone who is trained to do this. You can also ask to talk to a man if you prefer. Alternatively, contact details can be found at the back of this booklet.

Coming out

Being gay or bisexual is nothing to be ashamed of – it's something you can feel proud about. Almost everyone feels stressed about "coming out" and sometimes it's like there is never the perfect time. Planning what you want to say can help you stay calm and in control. Heightened anxiety levels can be distracting and may cause additional bleeding episodes, requiring more treatment than normal.

If you have a girlfriend or wife you may feel guilty about carrying on a relationship or worried that it will end as soon as you tell. If you are worried about any medications which you feel might be affected, contact your centre to make alternative arrangements. If you have children you may be concerned that your partner will not let you see them in the future. You may want to consider getting some advice about what your legal rights are.

If you don't tell people who are close to you that you are gay, you may be cutting them off from a very important part of your life. Keeping secrets is not only stressful but can raise concern from those close to you, adding more pressure to tell them before you are ready. If you come from a different culture or religious background that may make it especially difficult.

No Sex we're British

Having a bleeding disorder doesn't mean that you can't enjoy sex. Have fun and bear in mind that there is nothing you can't do.

***We would always recommend using a condom**

Cum

Some men with a bleeding disorder can occasionally have blood in their cum, called haemospermia. This can be worrying for both you, and the guy you're with. You might need to explain to him why this happens and tell the centre, as you would any bleed.

Oral Sex

Some people enjoy being sucked off or giving head. There is nothing to stop you enjoying this too. One important piece of advice, do *not* brush your teeth before you engage in oral sex. This is because brushing your teeth can cause your gums to bleed which make you susceptible to infections. We would recommend you use a good anti-bacterial mouthwash instead.

Playing games

Some people enjoy using sex toys, being spanked or tied up. Because of your bleeding disorder, you might have a higher pain threshold than others and it may be best to give yourself factor cover beforehand. It's important to think about your personal safety, negotiate what you will and will not be comfortable with and make sure that you have a "trigger" word that means STOP NOW.

Water Sports

It is very common for people with a bleeding disorder to have blood in their urine (pee). Where the water sports players have an existing infection and/or compromised immune systems, potential health risks are greater.

Anal Sex

There is no increased risk of bleeding just because you have a bleeding disorder, as long as you are relaxed, find a position that's comfortable and use plenty of lube. However, you could have treatment before, if not, and you do get a bleed, treat first if you can, then seek medical advice.

Personal Safety and Awareness

Living with a bleeding disorder doesn't automatically make you a target. Technology, such as the internet and mobile phone apps have made life a lot easier to meet people. Some might just be looking for one off, random sexual encounters. Some want more such as a "fuck-buddy" or a relationship, each bringing their personal demands and pressures. This technology does come with unique risks and raises some safety issues you might want to consider.

There are people who enjoy sex outdoors or in public places. These can be known as "cruising" areas, which can be a roadside lay-by, woods, parks or car parks. Sex in public toilets (cottaging) is illegal; however your personal safety and health should always be the most important thing.

- *You have rights*
- *Condoms break because they have been wrongly fitted, causing damage or a non-water based lube has been used*
- *There can be blood in poo (scat) which increases the risk of Hepatitis transmission, including Hepatitis A, B, C and E*
- *If you have not been vaccinated, consider screening and vaccination for Hepatitis A and B*
- *Possible risks go out of your mind when you are having fun, so it may help to think about exactly what you are and are not prepared to do. *It's ok to say no*
- *Having treatment before you go out could help you, if something were to happen. You will also be able to enjoy yourself more, if you meet Mr Right*
- *Love bites may cause serious bleeds into the throat, blocking your airway which can prove fatal if left untreated.*

Try not to give yourself or your guy a hard time if you forget to use a condom or it splits – practice makes perfect! The most common phrase used for not wearing a condom is *bare backing* and there are guys who will only want unprotected sex.

Homophobic attacks on gay/bi-sexual people (queer bashing) are sadly a very real threat today. These criminal offences can be for robbery, discrimination, or for more sinister reasons.

***Enjoy yourself but remember it's always OK to say NO**

Sexually Transmitted Infections

If you have sex without a condom you could be at risk from the following:

Other STI's like gonorrhoea, syphilis, herpes, Chlamydia or NSU (non-specific urethritis)

Viral infections like HIV and Hepatitis

Some infections can also be transmitted during oral sex and by non-penetrative genital-to-genital contact, such as genital warts, gonorrhoea

A lot of people with STI's do not feel any symptoms.

The first thing to do if you think you might have an STI is to stay calm.
If you do have symptoms such as:

- . Discharge from your penis and / or itching
- . Irritation, soreness or pain when you pee
- . Sores, spots or lumps around your genitals or anus, blisters start appearing

This doesn't mean you have got an STI as it is possible to get similar symptoms from infections such as Thrush. This can also cause itching, soreness and discharge but is easy to treat. Get tested as soon as you can so treatment can be given, if needed.

You can get advice or a sexual health check up from any GUM clinic. This is confidential and your Haemophilia Centre won't be told about your visit. You could use a false name if you're worried.

Having a regular sexual health check up, the same way you do for your Haemophilia, is a good routine to get into.

Some men actively try to find guys who have HIV for their own sexual pleasure. In parts of the world these people are sometimes referred to as "*bugchasers*". If you feel you are being pressurised or forced into doing something you are not comfortable with stop.

***It's ok to say no**

Hepatitis and HIV

If you are living with a bleeding disorder and have Hepatitis / HIV or the man you have sex with has Hepatitis / HIV here are a few things to consider:

- . If you tell someone you have a bleeding disorder this may bring up issues around sex and the two most known about viruses HCV and HIV. So it may help to think about how you are going to answer any questions, whether or not you are affected
- . If you have a Hepatitis virus, such as B or C and / or HIV, people may ask you whether you contracted the virus through blood products, injecting drug use or sex
- . If you are living with HIV, this doesn't mean you should only have sex with other men with HIV – it may be the only thing you have in common
- . Levels of Hepatitis C (HCV) can be higher in people who also have HIV and may increase the risk of transmission
- . Unlike other viral infections Hepatitis B can easily be contracted
- . Treatment for both HCV and HIV can affect your libido (getting a hard on)
- . If someone's HIV viral load is undetectable this doesn't mean HIV can't be transmitted and HIV in semen can be higher than in blood
- . Hepatitis B (HBV) is most often contracted through sexual activities
- . If you both have HIV and don't use a condom, either of you could get a different strain of HIV or a drug resistant strain, or another sexually transmitted disease

“When I was told I was Hep C positive I wasn't sure what this meant for my sex life”

***There are organisations listed at the back of this booklet or on the Haemosexual website that can give you information, support and advice about HIV and Hepatitis**

Viagra (Sildenafil Citrate)

The safety information below regarding Viagra (Sildenafil citrate) must be applied to other medications used for the treatment of erectile dysfunction.

The need for precaution before taking these products is essential and medical advice should be sought before attempting to use Viagra.

Be sure to tell your doctor if you:

Have ever had any heart problems (e.g., angina, chest pain, heart failure, irregular heart beats, heart attack or narrowing of the aortic valve)

Have ever had a stroke

Have low or high blood pressure

Have ever had severe vision loss

Have a rare inherited eye disease called retinitis pigmentosa

Have ever had any kidney problems

Have ever had any liver problems

Have ever had any blood problems, including sickle cell anaemia or leukaemia

Are allergic to sildenafil or any of the other ingredients of VIAGRA tablets

Have a deformed penis, Peyronie's disease, or ever had an erection that lasted more than 4 hours

Have stomach ulcers, or a bleeding problem (**such as Haemophilia**).

Are taking any other medicines, this includes protease inhibitors for the treatment of HIV

Your Checklist

We have put together a few things for you to remember.

- . Ensure your Haemophilia Centre has your correct personal details, including contact details
- . Change of GP details, if visiting other parts of the UK, or relocating
- . If travelling outside of the UK, ensure you have an up to date Customs letter from your Haemophilia Centre
- . A change of address for treatment / medication deliveries
- . If you have a partner and you wish them to be given information about your health in-case of an emergency. Ensure you give written consent, to be placed on your notes
- . Next of kin

For more detailed information on these and other subjects not covered in this booklet please go to www.haemosexual.co.uk

Support and Information

For more information, or if you would like to speak to someone, contact details of organisations are below. Additional links for men who have sex with other men and are living with a bleeding disorder, can be obtained on the Haemosexual website www.haemosexual.co.uk / www.haemosexual.com

Haemophilia Scotland

www.haemophiliascotland.org

www.facebook.com/HaemophiliaScotland

www.twitter.com/HaemophiliaScot

Terrence Higgins Trust

www.tht.org.uk

www.facebook.com/TerrenceHigginsTrust

@THTorguk

THT local service centre search

www.tht.org.uk/our-charity/Get-help-now/Service-finder

The Hepatitis C Trust

www.hepctrust.org.uk

www.facebook.com/HepatitisCTrust

@HepatitisCTrust

LGBT Switchboard - Provides free & confidential support & information to lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgendered communities throughout the UK. Local switchboard contact details can be found online.

London

www.switchboard.lgbt

@switchboardLGBT

www.facebook.com/switchboardLGBT

Scotland

www.lgbt-helpline-scotland.org.uk

Northern Ireland

www.cara-friend.org.uk/projects/lgbt-switchboard-ni

Wales

www.lgbtcymruhelpline.org.uk

HELPLINE 0300 330 0630 (DAILY 10AM - 11PM)

NHS and NHS 111 Service.

www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Sexualhealthtopics/Pages/Sexual-health-hub.aspx?WT.mc_id=110903

www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/AboutNHSservices/Emergencyandurgentcareservices/Documents/2012/NHS%2011%20Easy%20Read%20leaflet.pdf

www.facebook.com/NHSChoices

@NHSChoices

Apps

<http://apps.nhs.uk/tags/sexual-health>

Always dial 999 in an emergency



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