

## 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 to protect your lips when smoking.
- A pipe screen is the safest type of screen for your crack pipe.
  - If you don't have a pipe screen (available at local smoke shops), use a small piece of household copper scrubbing pad. Burn the pad a bit first to mold it into the pipe.
  - Change your copper scrubbing pad screen often to prevent it from hurting 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 for better sensation.
- 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.