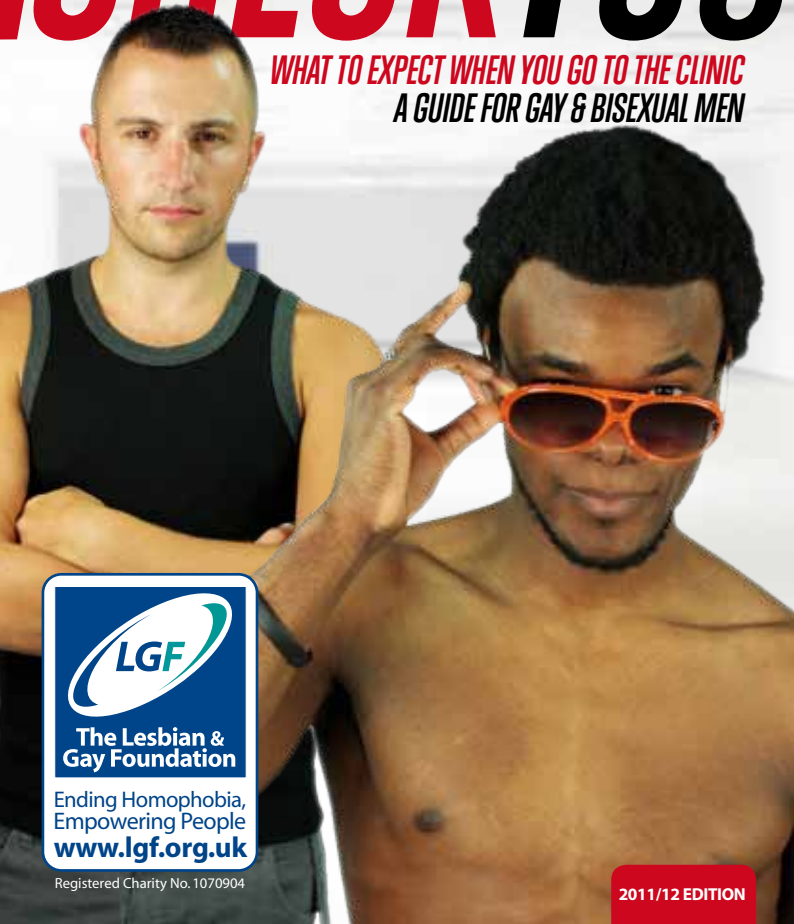


ICHECK YOU

*WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU GO TO THE CLINIC
A GUIDE FOR GAY & BISEXUAL MEN*



**The Lesbian &
Gay Foundation**

Ending Homophobia,
Empowering People
www.lgf.org.uk

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CHECKED!

Regular sexual health check ups make sense if you want to make sure that you are looking after your health. You don't have to have symptoms to be seen at a sexual health clinic.

This guide will let you know what to expect when you go for a check up... and you might find that it's not as scary as you think!

Sexual health clinics are staffed by friendly, non-judgemental staff who are not easily shocked!

Don't just take our word for it! Throughout this guide are quotes from LGF service users who have given their feedback on Greater Manchester Sexual Health Clinics.

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NEED TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT? IT'S EASY!



Some clinics work on a walk in basis, where you register and are given a time that you will be seen. Others operate on a 'While You Wait' walk in where you turn up and are seen when the next slot is available, and some will ask you to make an appointment.

You will usually be seen within 48 hours of requesting a check up. If you have symptoms, such as genital discharge or genital blisters, or pain when peeing you may be seen quicker, or asked to attend the next 'Walk In' session.

In all cases, sexual health clinics are usually very busy places, so make sure you check in advance for the opening times, as well as the appointment or walk in system that the clinic operates.

You can also choose to use the clinic that is most convenient for you, whether that be closer to home, or closer to work. The choice is yours.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU ARRIVE? **IT'S CONFIDENTIAL**

When you arrive you should go to the reception desk, where you will be asked to register. You will be asked personal details, such as name, address and the way that you want to be contacted. You will also be asked for your date of birth, and the name of your GP.

No details would ever be passed on to anyone outside of the clinic without your permission.

If you prefer, you can give a false name as long as you would remember to be contactable under that name.

It is in your interests to give details accurately, and clinics are bound by law to keep all information confidential.



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I'M CALLED TO BE SEEN?

There will be a few questions...

You will be called from the waiting room, usually by your first name only. You will be seen by a doctor or nurse, who will ask you some questions. You should expect to be asked about:

- *The last time you had sex (and what kind of sex this was).*
- *The last time you had sex without a condom.*
- *If you have had sex with someone who has an infection.*
- *About any symptoms you might have.*

You should try and be as honest as possible. Staff are not there to judge, but to make sure that you have all of the tests that you need.

“I didn’t plan to go to the clinic, until I was walking past and then all of a sudden I was inside. The staff were really friendly, and the nurses made me feel comfortable. I would definitely recommend this service to anyone who thinks they need to get a test. It’s quick, hassle free and reassuring.”

**SAME DAY
HIV TESTING
SERVICE
USER**



“The staff were very friendly, and made a potentially embarrassing situation very comfortable. The nurse was also excellent. I would like to stress how much I think that this is a valuable service, and I have recommended this to my friends.”

***SEXUAL HEALTH OUTREACH
CLINIC SERVICE USER***

WHAT CAN I BE TESTED FOR?

Sexual Health Clinics provide services for the treatment and care of sexually transmitted infections, HIV testing and advice on sexual health concerns. The services are provided by a dedicated team of doctors, nurses and health advisers. Services offered usually include:

- *Sexual health screening, advice and treatments.*
- *You can get tested for gonorrhoea, syphilis, chlamydia, HIV, as well as treatments for genital and anal warts, genital herpes, non-specific genital infections and pubic lice.*
- *HIV screening, advice and treatments.*
- *Contraception information and provision of treatment.*
- *Impotence treatment (not all clinics offer this; please check by contacting them first).*
- *Genital dermatology.*
- *Counselling.*
- *Safer sex advice.*




WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN I GET TESTED?

The tests might include:

- *Urine sample.*
- *Swabs for the throat and arse (and cock if you have symptoms).*
- *A blood sample.*
- *An examination of the genitals.*

Although the tests might be a little uncomfortable, they're not painful, and any stories about a 'metal umbrella' are simply not true! ***You should not pee for at least an hour before your appointment.*** If you have not been vaccinated against Hepatitis B then you will be offered a course of injections. It is in your best interests to be vaccinated against Hep B, just in case you ever come into contact with it.



"I had been meaning to have a check up for some time but had not got round to it for a variety of reasons. Additionally the nurse who took the tests was also very friendly and welcoming. Overall I found this to be a simple process and I have recommended using this method for check ups to friends."

**SEXUAL HEALTH
OUTREACH CLINIC
SERVICE USER**

QUESTIONS

Clinics will be able to answer any questions you have around HIV, STIs and sexual health. Most clinics will have health advisors that you can talk to, or ask the doctor or nurse when they initially have a one to one with you. They will also have condoms and lube available for you to take away. Advisors are also available to give advice on safer sex and condom use.

“The nurse I saw really heard everything I needed to say and answered all my questions. Despite the anxiety, it was a very professional, slick and positive experience. I would have no hesitation in recommending the service.”

LGF SERVICE USER.





"I remember a time when visiting a clinic was very dark and most staff did nothing to alleviate anxiety - there could not have been a more radical difference to the experience I had yesterday. The workers were warm, friendly and attentive and really helped to make everyone feel more relaxed."

**IGF SERVICE
USER 2011**

A young man with short brown hair, smiling, wearing a bright red polo shirt and dark jeans. He is positioned on the left side of the page, partially overlapping a red background at the top.

RESULTS

Results are usually given out no later than two weeks of you attending the clinic, and the way that they are given out varies from clinic to clinic. You will be advised as to the method, whether this be by text, over the phone, via messaging service or face to face.

Results are only ever given to you, and they are all fully confidential.

TREATMENTS

If an infection is diagnosed straight away, then the treatment will be given out there and then. It is important that you complete any treatment given, even if the symptoms go away. Sometimes treatments are given as injections. You will be given the best treatment for your own circumstances, and you should follow any instructions given to you by clinic staff.

All treatments from Sexual Health Clinics are free.

PEP

(POST EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS)

If you think that you have been exposed to HIV due to having unprotected sex, or a condom breaking, there is a course of medication that you can take which may prevent you becoming HIV positive. PEP is a four week course of anti HIV medication that must be taken within 72 hours of possible exposure.

The course of treatment can have side effects such as nausea, diarrhoea and severe headaches, which can make it necessary to take time of work.

It should not be thought of as a 'morning after pill' for HIV.

PEP is not guaranteed to work in 100% of cases, but the sooner you can get access to the treatment following the possible exposure, the more likely it is to work.

You can only access PEP up to a maximum of 72 hours following possible exposure, and is not likely to be effective after this time.

The course of treatment is available from sexual health clinics, and also from A&E departments. If you think you have been exposed to HIV, you should speak to a sexual health clinic as soon as possible.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I GET TESTED?

Current guidelines suggest that gay and bisexual men should have an HIV test at least once every 12 months, but everyone is different and some people might need more than one.

There are currently no guidelines about how often to test for other sexually transmitted infections, but it stands to reason that the more partners you have, the more you should test.

You should **always** go for a test as soon as you notice any symptoms, even if they apparently clear up.

You should **always** go for a test if you are in a new relationship and want to stop using condoms (continue to use condoms for three months, and then both go for a full sexual health screen, just to be sure).

You should **always** go for a test if you think that you have been exposed to any sexually transmitted infection.



OTHER WAYS TO TEST? R U CLEAR

RUClear offer free tests to Greater Manchester residents for the sexually transmitted infections (STIs) chlamydia, gonorrhoea, HIV and syphilis.

- **Tests for Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea in under 25 year olds** (NB: will only detect infections in the penis; if you have had unprotected anal or oral sex then you should have a full sexual health screen).

- **Tests for HIV & Syphilis (all ages).**

For both tests you can order a kit online, and you can do the tests at home. R U Clear will also often take the tests to non-clinical settings such as colleges and universities.

Call 0800 0461303

(Confidential Advice Line)





RAPID (SAME DAY) HIV TESTING

Tests for HIV in this way are done by taking a finger prick of blood, and using a test that shows the results the same day, usually within half an hour.

Some tests might pick up infections within about 4 weeks of possible exposure to HIV, **but any negative result must be confirmed by taking another test after three months to be sure**

If you think you have been exposed to HIV, you might also have been exposed to other infections, and even if your HIV test is negative, you should go for a full sexual health screen.

“The fact that no appointment was needed really made the service approachable. I would definitely recommend this service... It’s quick, hassle free and reassuring.”

IGF RAPID HIV TESTING CLIENT, 2010.

OUTREACH CLINICS

Community organisations often work with local GUM services to take sexual health clinics into non-clinical settings to target at risk populations. Examples include taking full sexual health screens into gay and bisexual men’s saunas, or Pride events.

With such a variety of ways to get tested, it really has never been easier to take control of your sexual health. In the end the message is simple

***“Know Your Status:
Get Tested!”***





MONDAY OUTREACH CLINICS

Full sexual health clinics in gay and bisexual men's saunas in Manchester City Centre and at The Lesbian & Gay Foundation:

FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

BASEMENT SAUNA, 18 Tariff Street, Manchester, M1 2FN.

1:00pm – 4:00pm. *Last test 3:40pm.*

SECOND MONDAY OF THE MONTH

H2O SAUNA, 38 Sackville Street, Manchester, M1 3WA.

1:00pm – 4:00pm. *Last test 3:40pm.*

THIRD MONDAY OF THE MONTH

BASEMENT SAUNA, 18 Tariff Street, Manchester, M1 2FN.

1:00pm – 4:00pm. *Last test 3:40pm.*

FOURTH MONDAY OF THE MONTH

THE LESBIAN & GAY FOUNDATION, Number 5, Richmond Street, Manchester, M1 3HF. 4:00pm – 6:00pm. *Last test 5:40pm.*

When there is a fifth Monday in a month there is no clinic, and if the Monday is a Bank Holiday, the clinic moves to the Tuesday.

The Lesbian & Gay Foundation run clinics in partnership with the Manchester Centre for Sexual Health and Manchester Public Health Development Service every Monday & Thursday afternoon. Appointments not necessary. Please call 0845 3 30 30 30.



THURSDAY SAME DAY HIV CLINICS

Point of care HIV clinic with results available within 30 minutes of taking the test. Syphilis tests also available and results for this are given within two weeks of taking the test.

Every Thursday afternoon at The Lesbian & Gay Foundation, Number 5, Richmond Street, Manchester, M1 3HF. 4:00pm – 6:00pm. Last test available 5:30pm.

Clinic times for both clinics can vary over Christmas. Please go to www.lgf.org.uk/testing to check what times the clinics are running.

“The fact that no appointment was needed really made the service approachable. I would definitely recommend this service... It’s quick, hassle free and reassuring.”

LGF RAPID HIV TESTING CLIENT, 2010.

GREATER MANCHESTER NHS CLINICS

BOLTON

Bolton Centre for Sexual Health, Minerva Road, Farnworth, Bolton.
BL4 0JR. Phone: 01204 390771

BURY

The Barlow Suite (Sexual Health Clinic), Fairfield General Hospital,
Rochdale Old Road, Bury. BL9 7TD. Phone: 0161 778 2800

HEYWOOD, MIDDLETON & ROCHDALE

The Bridge Sexual Health Clinic, GUM Clinic - Sexual Health
Clinic, 2nd Floor, Stonehill Block, Rochdale Infirmary Whitehall
Street, Rochdale, OL12 0NB. Phone: 0161 627 8753

MANCHESTER

Manchester Centre for Sexual Health, The Hathersage Centre, 280
Upper Brook Street, Manchester, M13 0FH. Phone: 0161 276 5200

North Manchester Sexual Health Clinic, North Manchester
General Hospital, Delaunays Road, Manchester, M8 5RB. Phone:
0161 720 2681

South Manchester Sexual Health Clinic, 1st Floor, Withington
Community Hospital, Nell Lane, Manchester, M20 2LR.
Appointments. Phone: 0161 217 4939.



OLDHAM

The Phoenix Sexual Health Centre, GUM Clinic - Sexual Health Clinic, The Royal Oldham Hospital, Rochdale Road, Oldham, OL1 2JH. Appointments. Phone: 0161 627 8753

SALFORD

Goodman Centre for Sexual Health, Lance Burn Medical Centre, Churchill Way, Salford, M6 5QX. Phone: 0161 212 5717

STOCKPORT

Stepping Hill Hospital GUM Department, Stepping Hill Hospital, Stockport, SK2 7JE. Phone: 0161 419 5370/1

TAMESIDE & GLOSSOP

Tameside & Glossop Centre for Sexual Health, Ashton Primary Care Centre, 193 Old St, Ashton-Under-Lyne, OL6 7SR. Appointments and drop in – please phone for more information. *(NB This clinic is open on a Saturday for asymptomatic screening between 11:15 – 14:30)* Phone: 0161 342 7101

TRAFFORD

Trafford Centre for Sexual Health, Trafford General Hospital, Moorside Road, Davyhulme, M41 5SL. Appointments and drop in. Phone: 0161 746 2621

WIGAN

Sexual Health Services, The Shine Centre, The Galleries Shopping Centre, Wigan, WN1 1PX. Phone: 01942 483 188

We believe in a fair and equal society where all lesbian, gay and bisexual people can achieve their full potential.

This guide is available in large print by calling **0845 3 30 30 30** or email **info@lgf.org.uk**



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