

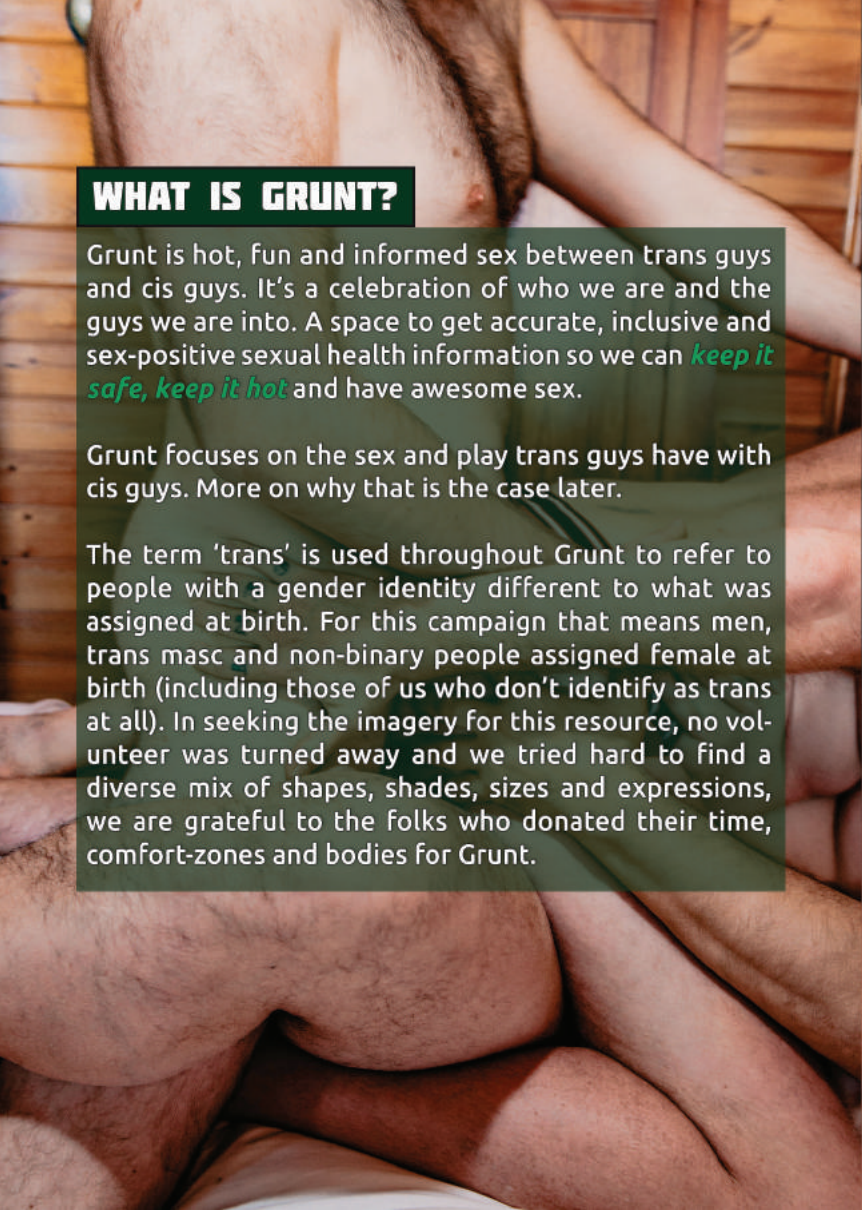


**Sexual health and more
for gay, bi and queer
trans men**

GRUNT

keep it safe | keep it hot | trans men into men

www.grunt.org.au

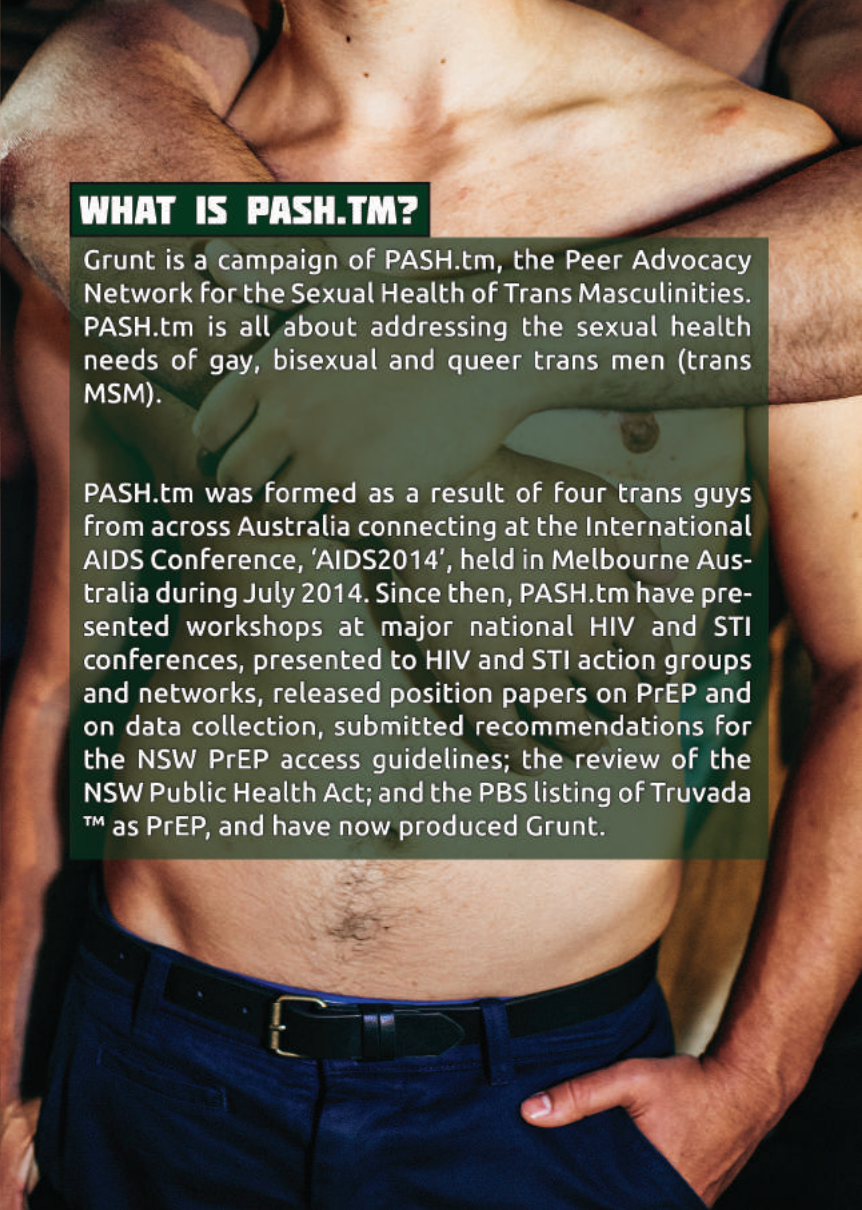
A close-up photograph of a person's bare torso and arms, showing skin texture and body hair. The person is wearing a dark strap over their shoulder.

WHAT IS GRUNT?

Grunt is hot, fun and informed sex between trans guys and cis guys. It's a celebration of who we are and the guys we are into. A space to get accurate, inclusive and sex-positive sexual health information so we can *keep it safe, keep it hot* and have awesome sex.

Grunt focuses on the sex and play trans guys have with cis guys. More on why that is the case later.

The term 'trans' is used throughout Grunt to refer to people with a gender identity different to what was assigned at birth. For this campaign that means men, trans masc and non-binary people assigned female at birth (including those of us who don't identify as trans at all). In seeking the imagery for this resource, no volunteer was turned away and we tried hard to find a diverse mix of shapes, shades, sizes and expressions, we are grateful to the folks who donated their time, comfort-zones and bodies for Grunt.

A close-up photograph of a person's bare torso and arms, showing skin texture and body hair. The person is wearing a dark strap over their shoulder.

WHAT IS PASH.TM?

Grunt is a campaign of PASH.tm, the Peer Advocacy Network for the Sexual Health of Trans Masculinities. PASH.tm is all about addressing the sexual health needs of gay, bisexual and queer trans men (trans MSM).

PASH.tm was formed as a result of four trans guys from across Australia connecting at the International AIDS Conference, 'AIDS2014', held in Melbourne Australia during July 2014. Since then, PASH.tm have presented workshops at major national HIV and STI conferences, presented to HIV and STI action groups and networks, released position papers on PrEP and on data collection, submitted recommendations for the NSW PrEP access guidelines; the review of the NSW Public Health Act; and the PBS listing of TruvadaTM as PrEP, and have now produced Grunt.

A photograph of a man with a beard and glasses, looking towards the right. He is shirtless and wearing a thin necklace. Another person's arm and shoulder are visible on the right side of the frame. The background is a teal wall with a framed picture on the left.

KEEP IT SAFE | KEEP IT HOT

Gay men are disproportionately affected by HIV in Australia, in fact most of the newly reported diagnoses each year are among gay men living in our capital cities. Trans MSM are part of this community. When compared to other LBQ populations, gay men experience a greater prevalence of STIs as well so it's a good idea to stay in the loop about what the risks are so you can make informed choices about how you want to look after your sexual health. This is what Grunt is all about.

Testosterone does significantly reduce the risk of pregnancy but it should not be relied on as 100% effective for birth control.

Safe sex is so much more than this though.

COMMUNICATION

The key to hot, safe and smart sex is communication and negotiation. This includes talking about what kind of sex you're into, how you want to play, consent, your boundaries, and how each of you will engage with, understand and prioritise sexual health. Ultimately your sexual health is your own responsibility.

DISCLOSURE

This is a big one and can be the source of so much anxiety, whether it's about your HIV status or your trans experience. We worry that we will get hurt—or worse—and these are very real concerns so it's important to think carefully about how you'll approach it. Even though it's likely the bloke will just walk away if he's not interested, it's important to stay alert.

Some guys include a brief description about being trans and/or their HIV status on app profiles and some might also include a link such as www.grunt.org.au. Prepare yourself for the odd cringe moment and remember that you don't have to educate everyone you hook up with—boundaries are great! How you want to approach disclosure is up to you, but you may want to check out the HIV/AIDS Legal Service website (www.halc.org.au) for info about HIV and the law.

Cruising off the apps is trickier and when you find someone you want to get naked with, you need to

figure out if, when and how to tell him that you are trans. Think about a script such as *"Hey bud, just so you know. I'm trans. That means I've got a bonus hole/front hole/extra hard cock to play with. Cool?"*

If you're fisting or blowing someone, it may not be a thing worth mentioning. Don't assume that he won't be ok with it. But also expect that some cis men won't be into what you got. Don't let other people determine your self-worth or your boundaries.

When someone says no, that's ok too so don't push it. Consent means respecting either party not being up for it.

HOOKING UP AND SAFETY

If you are hooking up with someone, and you've set it up from an app, let a mate know where you are going. Chances are it will be fine, but it's a good idea to let someone know who you're with, where you are and how long you expect to be.

Take all the gear you need too, if that looks like condoms and lube for you, then bring them. Whatever your safe sex is, communicate it in advance. It helps to set your boundaries and limits before you arrive, but don't hesitate to do it in person or even if that changes for you, keep the communication going. It can be tough in the moment but it's important to remember that you alone are responsible for your sexual health.





DEALING WITH REJECTION

It might be rare but chances are, at some stage someone will reject you because you're trans. Don't let it get you down. If he misses out on you, it's his loss. There are plenty of cis guys into what you got and what you bring to a hook up, quickie, connection or a relationship.

DEALING WITH DYSPHORIA

Some guys experience it, some guys don't, but it can be such a downer to be getting hot and heavy with the cis guy of your dreams and suddenly your brain screams, nope! Try to keep breathing and talking (if you need). It's ok to stop and it's ok to respond in whatever way feels right for you. Bottoming in any of your holes does not make you less of a man, in fact some of the most macho cis guys are total bottoms. There are plenty of guys, cis and trans, with a diversity of chests sizes as well. What makes you a man is inside you, not what your body looks like.

TOOLS

There are a range of tools you can use to protect your sexual health. Condoms, PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis), TasP (Treatment as Prevention) and PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis) are the four main ways to stay HIV negative.

CONDOMS

Condoms form a physical barrier to prevent or reduce the exchange of bodily fluids (including pre-cum, cum, anal fluids, front hole fluids and blood) between partners during front hole or anal sex, and when using both a flesh and non-flesh cock. When used correctly, condoms provide a high level of protection against HIV, a range of other STIs and pregnancy.

PrEP

Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) is a daily medication that provides high levels of protection from HIV. The science is in on this one too. If taken as prescribed, PrEP can be a successful HIV prevention strategy, although it does not protect against STIs or pregnancy.

At the time of print, the only medication available and approved for use as PrEP in Australia is Truvada™ and it isn't currently available on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). There are trials in NSW, VIC and QLD that welcome trans men at risk of HIV infection though.

Information on other PrEP access options, including personal importation can be found at www.grunt.org.au.

The current best expert opinion is that PrEP protects both front hole and anal penetration after 7 days. It's important to take your PrEP every day.

TREATMENT AS PREVENTION (TasP)

HIV anti-retroviral treatments (ART) are so effective today that for most HIV positive people taking the medications every day, the virus becomes 'undetectable' for current blood tests to measure. This is good for two reasons: it means that the HIV is not doing (much) damage to the person's immune system; and it also means that the chance of passing on HIV to sexual partners is virtually eliminated.

Some guys who have an undetectable viral load use the symbol [+u] on hook up apps to signal that they are HIV positive and undetectable.

TasP is considered safe sex in relation to HIV transmission, although it doesn't prevent other STIs.





PEP

If you are worried that you might have been exposed to HIV then Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) is a four week course of anti-HIV drugs that may prevent HIV transmission. PEP needs to be taken within 72 hours of a potential exposure to HIV. PEP is most effective when started within 24 hours. You can find out where you can get PEP and more information at www.getpep.info.

WHAT'S THE RISK?

Trans guys are tops, bottoms, versatile, pigs, sweet lovers, power bottoms, doms, subs, switches and so much more. It's never cool to assume that all trans guys are bottoms. Plenty of us aren't into penetration at all and prefer to let our fingers, fists and cocks do the talking while some of us who bottom are up for anal sex only, others like it in every hole we've got.

We all deserve hot sex and a little bit of knowledge goes a long way.

A background image showing a couple in a sexual embrace. The focus is on the lower bodies and legs of the individuals, with hands visible on thighs and buttocks. The image is used as a backdrop for text boxes providing information about HIV and STIs.

HIV

The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) breaks down a person's immune system—the thing we have that fights infections and illnesses. Untreated and over time, HIV damages the immune system so much that a person will eventually develop Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

So how is HIV transmitted?

HIV can only be transmitted via blood, cum, pre-cum, breast milk, rectal mucus or front hole fluid getting into the blood stream of someone who is negative. So this means that for sex between guys, unprotected sexual intercourse and sharing needles are the predominant routes for transmission.

The Four E's

First of all, HIV needs to **exist** in the body of the person you're boning. So if he isn't HIV positive then you can't get HIV.

There also needs to be **enough** HIV in his bodily fluids for transmission to take place. So if he is HIV positive and takes ART it's likely that he will have an undetectable viral load which makes it virtually impossible for him to transmit HIV.

An **exit** point out of his body and **entry** point into your body also need to be a thing. Getting cum on skin is not an HIV risk; even oral sex is considered a very low risk of transmission.

STIs

STI's (Sexually Transmissible Infections) are essentially 'sex souvenirs'. They can be passed through sucking, fucking, eating, licking, fingering, touching or kissing, and can even be passed on by sharing toys. You can get an STI in your arse, your front hole, or your throat.

You might have seen graphic STI imagery of oozing cocks and dripping holes, but seriously, STIs may not have any symptoms whatsoever, so the only way to tell is to get a sexual health check every three to six months.



The most common STIs are chlamydia, gonorrhoea, genital and anal warts (HPV), syphilis and herpes (HSV), and it's easy to spread an STI from hole to hole. If you're into getting it in all your holes, make sure he only goes from front to back. Going from anal to front hole can result in a very painful infection.

Generally, STIs are easily treated but it's important to have them diagnosed and treated as soon as possible. Some STIs can also make you more susceptible to HIV infection.

If you have been diagnosed with an STI, it's really important and a nice thing to do to let your sexual partners know the story.

A simple text or app message might be:

"Just thought I'd let you know that my recent STI test came back and I'm now the proud owner of chlamydia. Not for long though! Maybe get a test as soon as you can."

If that's too hard or too confronting, you can notify him anonymously at www.thedramadownunder.info/notify/

TESTING 101

Testing regularly means that any infections can be detected and treated early and also helps you make informed choices about the sex you have, and protect the sexual health of your partners.

How often?

How often you should test really depends on how much sex you're having and what type of sex you're having. It is recommended that all guys into other guys get tested at least twice a year but every 3 months if you're getting action with multiple guys.

What should I expect?

Sexual health tests usually start with a registration process, which might be filling in a paper form or answering questions on a computer kiosk. Your confidentiality is always paramount. There is no requirement for you to disclose that you are trans, particularly if you have no STI symptoms. You may be asked how you identify your gender and also what gender you were assigned at birth. This is helpful data for a service to know so they get a sense of how many trans people they are seeing (or not).

Once you have got past the first step, a doctor or other sexual health clinician will want to chat about the kind of sex you've had over the last 3-6 months. They'll ask you some pretty direct questions about your sexual activity, talk to you about collecting tests samples from various parts of your body (which are usually 'self-collected'), and sometimes ask you a few questions to gauge your general knowledge about sexual health.

A standard sexual health screen usually checks for HIV, syphilis, chlamydia, gonorrhoea and sometimes hepatitis C (and hep A and B if you haven't been vaccinated).

All asymptomatic screening should be the same, regardless of gender experience: urine (self-collected in a cup), arse swabs (self-collected swab, use water to lube it up), and clinician collected blood and throat swabs.

Having symptoms means that the clinician may want to take other swabs. You can also decline this and they can't force you.

Where to test

There are many publicly funded sexual health clinics across Australia, they are often free and are staffed by sexual health clinicians. Many AIDS Councils operating in capital cities and some regional centres also provide rapid HIV testing and STI screening for gay and bisexual men using a peer-based model. These clinics all welcome trans guys.

A sexual health test can also be provided by a doctor but this may not be free of charge. Testing locations across Australia can be found at

www.time2test.org.au

Read more at www.grunt.org.au

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Australian Federation
of AIDS Organisations

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