

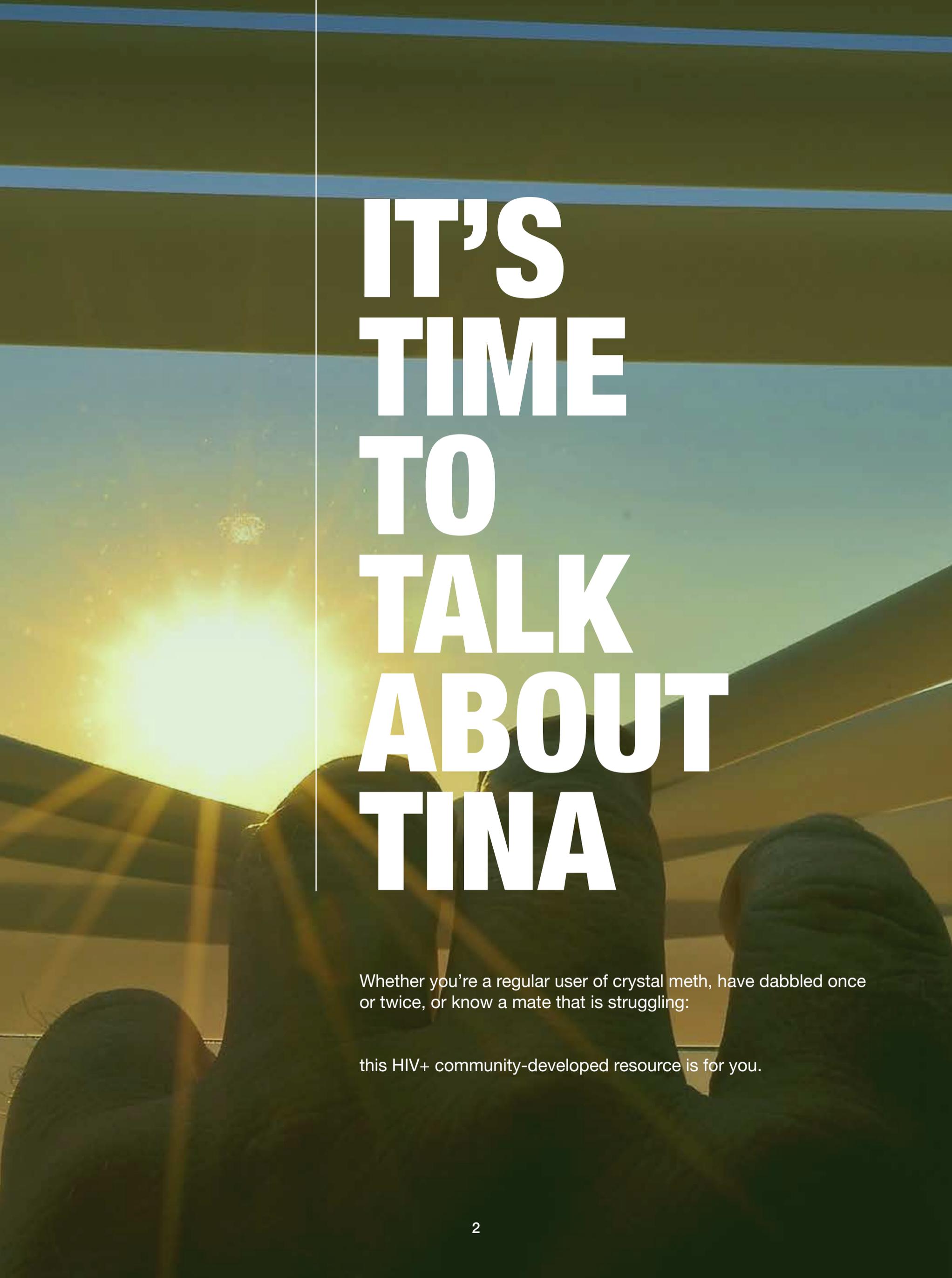
TURNING TINA

CHAPTER 4

HOW CAN I USE TINA IN
A SAFER WAY? PT.2

**A resource for queer men living with HIV who
use crystal meth AKA tina.**

Please read no further. The following material may trigger and/or
elicit cravings if you have or had an issue with substance use.



IT'S TIME TO TALK ABOUT TINA

Whether you're a regular user of crystal meth, have dabbled once or twice, or know a mate that is struggling:

this HIV+ community-developed resource is for you.

People's reasons for trying or using tina are varied.

This four-part resource outlines some of the facts about using tina, including what it does to your body and how you get it into your body. We also wanted to talk about some of the warning signs that might signal it's time to take a break or even get some help.

This resource has been created to offer practical advice, tailored to HIV positive gay and bi men (including trans men), on reducing harms associated with continuing use of methamphetamines.

However, we also acknowledge that ceasing methamphetamine use and remaining abstinent may not be a realistic or achievable goal for everyone.

We want to minimise the risks to your health, if you decide to use crystal meth. Let's talk about tina.

This resource has gathered practical risk reduction strategies and advice based upon survey responses and interviews with former and current tina users. Some information was provided by members of The Institute of Many, and the authors of this resource are very grateful for their honest contributions.

The Institute of Many (TIM) does not in any way endorse or encourage the use of illicit drugs and this resource emphasises the fact that the only way to totally avoid any of the risks associated with methamphetamine use is not to use methamphetamines.

The only way to avoid any adverse consequences from illicit and/or recreational drug use is not to use. However, a lot of guys have already made the decision to do so and they are no less deserving of support in seeking to reduce harmful consequences that can arise for themselves and for those who live and love with them.



IMPORTANT: The purchase, possession and supply (including 'gifting' or giving free of charge) of quite small quantities of methamphetamine is a criminal offence in all Australian states and territories and a conviction can create significant reputational, employment and international travel challenges and impements.

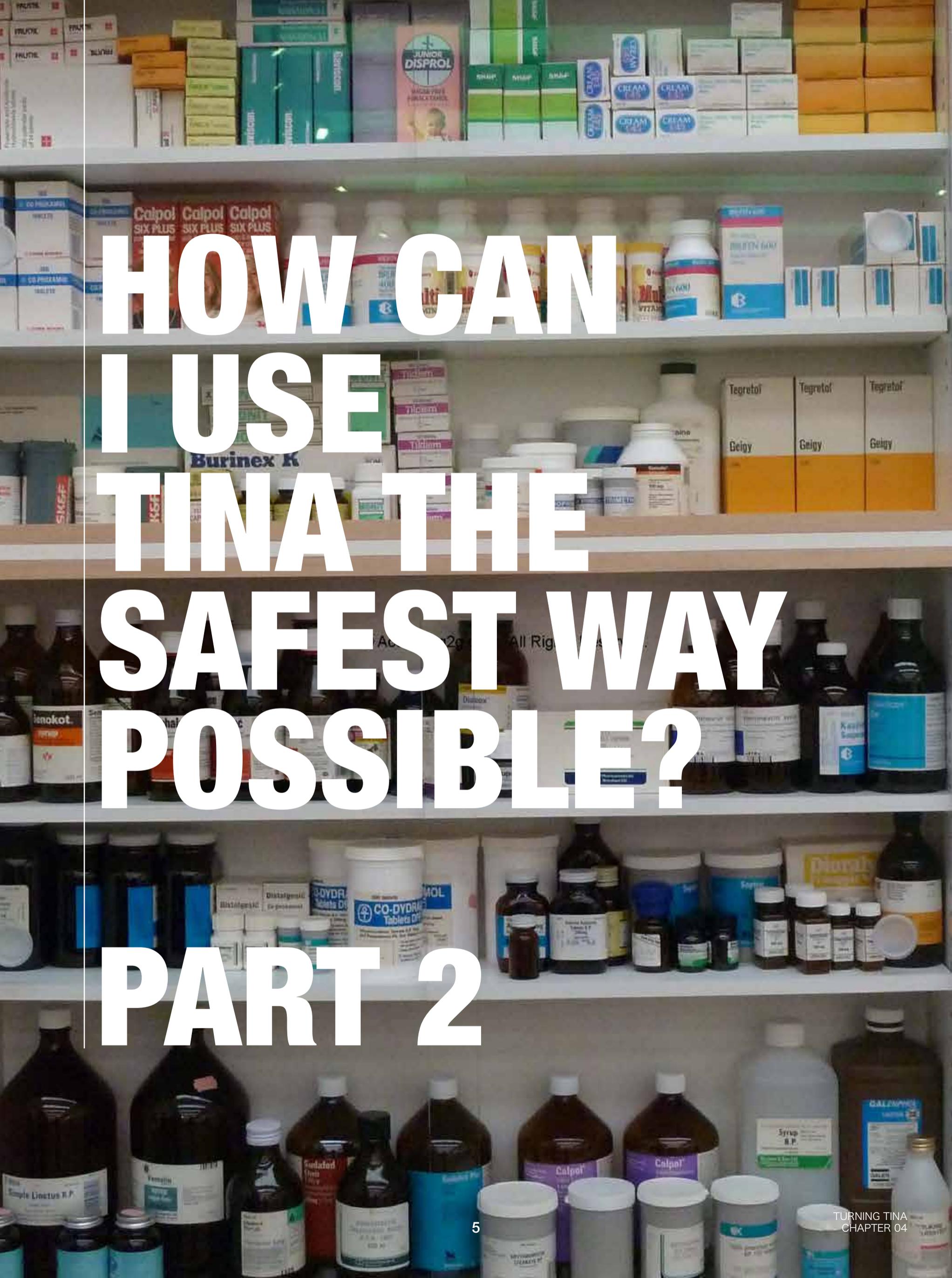
CHAPTER 4

HOW CAN I USE TINA IN A SAFER WAY? PT.2

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HOW CAN I USE TINA THE SAFEST WAY POSSIBLE?

PART 2



“

**I'M BEING DESTRUCTIVE,
AND I KNOW IT.**

- HIV POSITIVE GAY MAN, AGED 45 - 54

Let's point out the obvious and say that the only way to avoid any adverse consequences from tina is not to use it at all. However, some guys in our community have already made the decision to do so, and they are no less deserving of support.

If people who use drugs feel free to openly discuss their recreational behaviour and their friends approach that behaviour without judgement, that honesty informs an ongoing dialogue. The opposite is a community who are using drugs, but are too ashamed to tell anyone and thus may not get the answers they need to do so in a safer way.

The following chapter is by no means a how-to bible for using tina, but it does contain practical advice and information gathered from the community. One of the ways you can use tina in safer way is to help others stay safe, too.

HOW CAN I USE TINA THE SAFEST WAY POSSIBLE

PLANNING?



Before you set off to party, try and set yourself some limits:

Share these limits with friends you can trust or your party partner(s).

If you're partying with someone and they're trying to keep to a limit: help them, don't try and persuade them to do the opposite just because you want to keep the party going.

If someone says they've had enough, respect their decision just as you'd expect them to respect yours.

DURATION

How long would you like to party for? If you set off on a Friday night, do you want to be home by dawn VS home by Wednesday?

COMEDOWN

Remember that when you stop partying it isn't the end – your comedown cycle (including difficulty sleeping, lack of appetite and mood alterations) can last several days, depending on your intake. Make sure your fridge is stocked.

BUDGET

How much are you willing to spend on this party session? Have you already spent your budget collecting your supplies? In 12 hours or more (or less!) you might want more, and now lack the self-control to say no. Set yourself a budget, and if you can remove temptation. Take out the cash you need for taxis etc. and leave your card at home.

INTAKE METHOD

Is tonight kicking off by smoking crystal? Once you start partying, you might be tempted to up your high and blast, or do a booty bump. Set yourself a limit on the intake method, as well as the amount.



HOW CAN I USE TINA THE SAFEST WAY POSSIBLE EATING AND DRINKING?

Whether you think you're just off for a quick play or a number of days, eating enough pre-partying is vital. It's important you kick off a session having eaten throughout the day. Trying to eat throughout your session too, especially if it goes past 8-12 hours.



Focus on carbs and protein, not sugar. A piece of toast with will serve you better than a handful of lollies. A can of tuna is also a great way to quickly replenish.... Obviously you're going to want to brush your teeth afterwards! If this sounds more than a little bit disgusting try some liquidised energy drinks.



If you notice your party partner(s) are fading, ask them if they need to eat. A piece of toast goes a long way – especially if someone is feeling their latest dose of G.



Whether you think you're just off for a quick play or a number of days, eating enough pre-partying is vital. It's important you kick off a session having eaten throughout the day. Trying to eat throughout your session too, especially if it goes past 8 -12 hours.



Part of the fun of play sessions can be just hanging out with like-minded guys, so don't feel bad if you wanna put the breaks on and recharge.

I KNOW THAT IF I BLAST TINA ON AN EMPTY STOMACH, I AM GOING TO FEEL SICK RIGHT AWAY AND BE NO USE TO ANYONE. IF I'M GOING TO BLAST FOR A SECOND OR THIRD TIME IN A SESSION, I ALWAYS TAKE TIME TO EAT BEFORE I GO AGAIN.' ”

- HIV POSITIVE GAY MAN, AGED 25 - 34







”

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HIV IS SLOWLY GETTING BETTER AND MORE GUYS ARE WILLING TO PLAY WITH BOTH POZ AND NEG MEN. LOTS OF GUYS ARE SCARED OF HEP C THOUGH, AND DON'T KNOW THE RIGHT QUESTIONS TO ASK.

- HIV POSITIVE GAY MAN, AGED 45-54



HOW CAN I USE TINA THE SAFEST WAY POSSIBLE with HIV/HCV/STIs?

Most probably you'll be on HIV treatment, maybe with an undetectable viral load. Once upon a time, you'd likely be playing with guys in a similar situation, but with the advent of treatment as prevention and PrEP, that's not always the case. If you're playing with guys on the other side of the sero-divide, condoms and/or gloves may be required. Check with people present. How was the last time you asked the HIV status of a guy joining a play session?



Your daily treatment regime can go out the window on a big weekend. Make sure you bring a few doses of your HIV meds out with you, and set a reminder alarm to take them. When you take yours, check with the guys you're with in case they need to take some too.

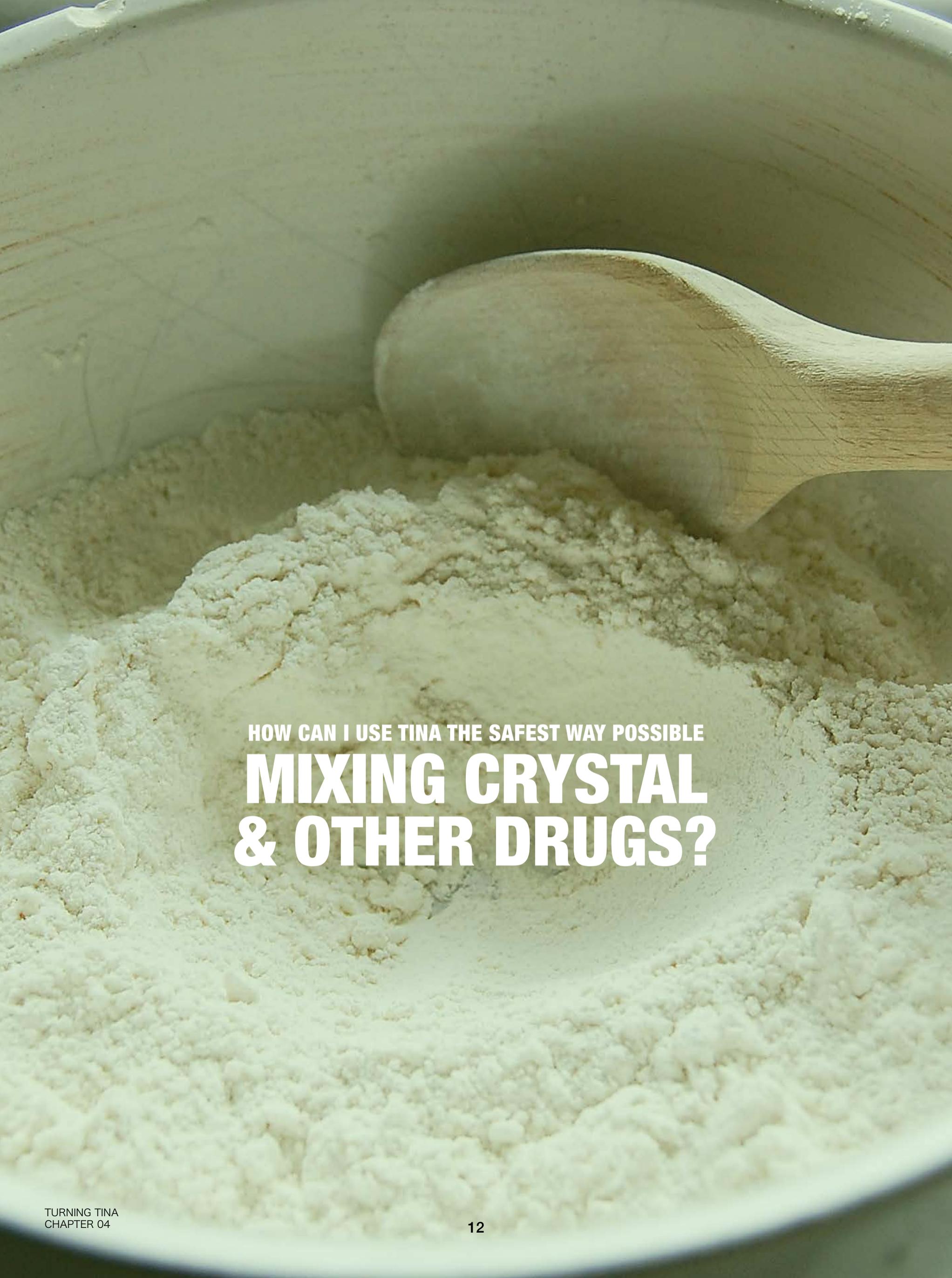


Hepatitis C transmission is a very real possibility in an extended play session, and that risk increases dramatically if you share injecting equipment. Condoms and gloves do provide protection from sexually acquired Hep C. If you don't want to take the risk it's a decision you're perfectly entitled to make. Nobody can guarantee being HCV – or STI – free past the 1st sexual encounter following their last negative test.



If you're playing in these scenes you should be testing for STIs (including HCV) at least four times a year. If you do contract an STI ensure that the guys you've been playing with are informed (they'll be grateful for it) and don't start playing again until you have the all clear from your doc.





HOW CAN I USE TINA THE SAFEST WAY POSSIBLE
**MIXING CRYSTAL
& OTHER DRUGS?**

Often, party sessions on crystal can involve other drugs. If so, be mindful how these may interact with crystal or require their own monitoring:

THE FIRST TIME A GUY ”
G'D OUT ON ME WAS
TERRIFYING. HE THREW
HIMSELF AROUND HIS
APARTMENT AND DOWN
THE STAIRS. I DIDN'T KNOW
WHAT TO DO.

- HIV POSITIVE GAY MAN, AGED 25 - 34

TINA & G

This is one of the most common mixes of party drugs. Being on crystal can impede your judgement/memory when it comes to keeping track of your G doses. Keep a running tally on your phone of when/how much you and your party partner(s) dosed.

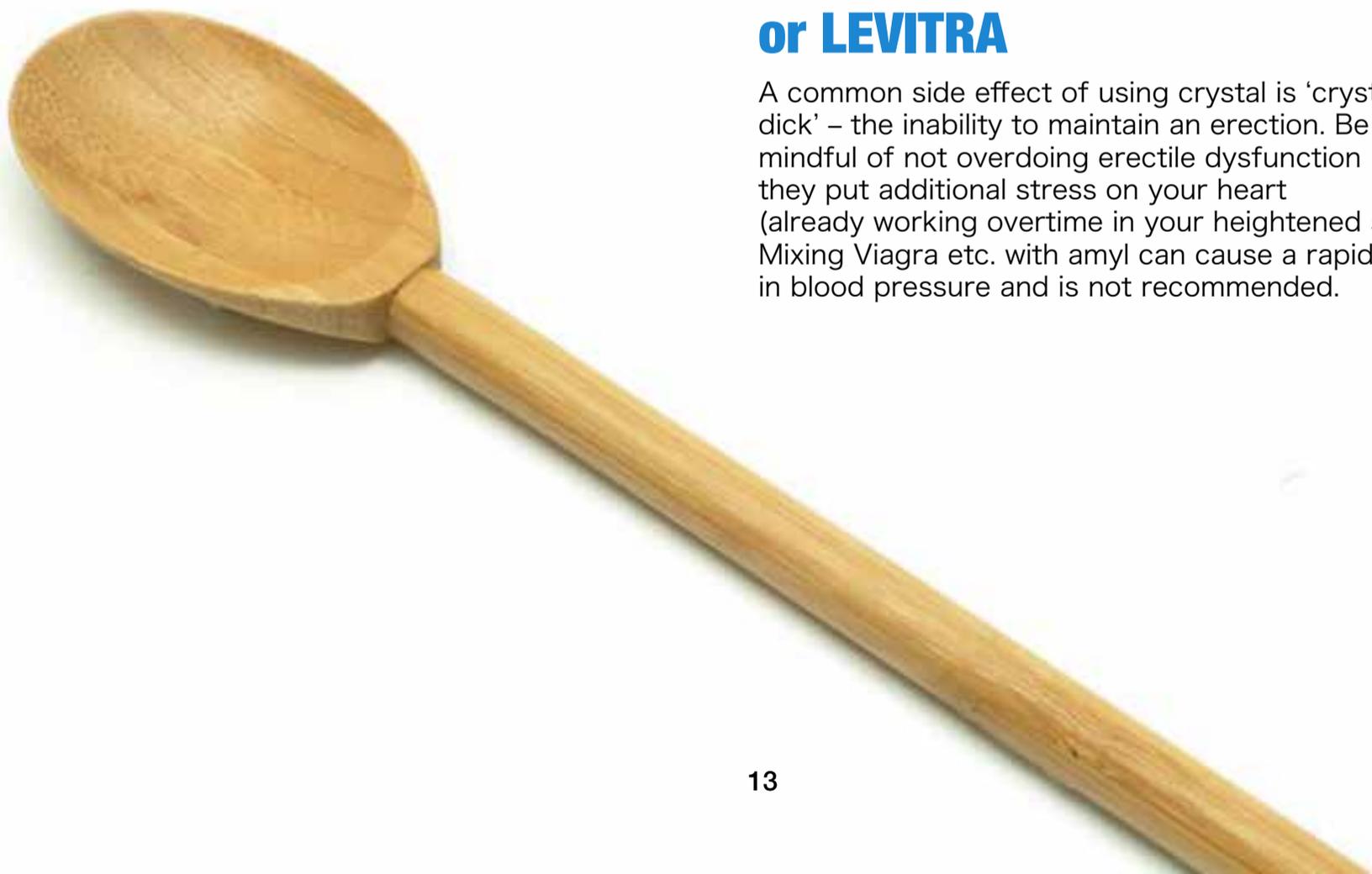
G is crucially dose dependent. A smidgeon over the limit can render someone unconscious and in need of medical assistance. If your party partner is having a bad reaction to G (from passing out to acting forcefully/erratically) look out for them. Get them to lie down in the recovery position (on their side) and keep checking on them. If in any doubt about their wellbeing call an ambulance **immediately**.

TINA & OTHER RECREATIONAL DRUGS

Mixing tina and other recreational drugs like cocaine, MDMA, or speed isn't very common in the party'n'play scene, but it can happen. Be mindful of how mixing too many drugs at once, and the extreme pressure you're placing on your heart (and other parts of your body).

TINA & VIAGRA/CIALIS or LEVITRA

A common side effect of using crystal is 'crystal dick' – the inability to maintain an erection. Be mindful of not overdoing erectile dysfunction pills, they put additional stress on your heart (already working overtime in your heightened state). Mixing Viagra etc. with amyl can cause a rapid drop in blood pressure and is not recommended.



YOU ARE NOT ALONE

“ TO BE HONEST IT'S GIVEN ME COMPASSION FOR PEOPLE WHO I USED TO JUDGE AS BEING WEAK WILLED OR LACKING SELF-CONTROL. IT'S ACTUALLY POSSIBLE FOR PEOPLE TO LOSE IT A BIT
- HIV POSITIVE GAY MAN, AGED 25 - 34

Whether you're thinking about trying it, use recreationally, or find your usage is getting away from you, it's vital to have people you can trust who are willing to discuss these issues with you..

If you have none in your social circle, look online at some of the peer user networks associated with various HIV sector organisations.

It's important to understand that there's a lot of stigma around drug use, particularly in relation to tina. Some gay guys who have no issues with recreational drug use may be deeply disapproving at any hint of crystal use and you should be careful to avoid disclosing to anyone until you've established that you won't be judged, or have your recreational or problematic usage discussed without your consent.

One side effect of crystal stigmatisation has been the creation of a 'hidden' tribal network of men who use and they can be an incredibly valuable source of harm reduction information. However, it is also important to recognise some guys experiencing problematic use of tina may enable each other to keep using instead of getting help. Even if you've just started using, consider disclosing to your doctor (especially if you're HIV+).

They will of course advise against it but most doctors who have significant caseloads of gay, bi and trans men are also very aware of the realities of LGBTIQ life and your doctor can end up being a useful touchstone throughout your relationship with crystal and help you realise when things are getting out of hand.

If you are experiencing problematic use, there are a number of organisations that have programs to help.



WHERE CAN YOU GO FOR INFORMATION, ADVICE, OR SUPPORT?

To help stay in control of your tina, to connect with the HIV+ community, to talk to someone, or learn more about harm minimisation.

Please note these organisations have not necessarily endorsed or approved this resource or its content. Their contact information may have changed since publication.

AROUND AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIAN INJECTING & ILLICIT DRUG USER LEAGUE (AIVL)

The national organisation representing people who use/have used illicit drugs and is the peak body for state and territory peer-based drug user organisations.

W aivil.org.au
R Safer Injecting Guide

AUSTRALIAN DRUG FOUNDATION

Facts & Resources about Alcohol and Drugs.

W druginfo.adf.org.au

THE NOFFS FOUNDATION

Provides comprehensive life management programs designed to equip youth at risk with the skills to better manage their own lives.

W noffs.org.au

BLUELIGHT

An online forum on different harm reduction strategies.

W bluelight.org

THE INSTITUTE OF MANY

TIM offers a confidential peer-run space on social media, connecting people living with HIV from around the world. We also run social events around the country.

W theinstituteofmany.org

DRUGSMETER

A 4 minute anonymous survey to determine where you may fit in the recreational/problematic spectrum.

W drugsmeter.com

TOUCHBASE

Information, Support & Services for LGBTI Australians.

W touchbase.org.au

UNHARM

Drug-use Advocacy Group

W unharm.org

STATEWIDE SERVICES

NEW SOUTH WALES

ACON

W acon.org.au
P (02) 9206 200
E aod@acon.org.au

ACON's STIMULANT HEALTH CHECK UP

W stimcheck.org.au

POSITIVE LIFE NSW

W positivelife.org.au
P (02) 9206 2177

NSW USERS & AIDS ASSOCIATION

W nuaa.org.au
P (02) 8354 7300

NEEDLE & SYRINGE PROGRAM DIRECTLINE

P (02) 8354 743

VICTORIA

LIVING POSITIVE VICTORIA

W livingpositivevictoria.org.au
P (03) 9863 8733

VICTORIAN AIDS COUNCIL

W vac.org.au
P (03) 9865 6700

HARM REDUCTION VICTORIA

W hrvic.org.au
P (03) 9328 1500

QUEENSLAND

QLD POSITIVE PEOPLE

W qpp.net.au
P (07) 3013 5555

QLD AIDS COUNCIL

W quac.org.au
P (07) 3013 1777

QLD INJECTORS HEALTH NETWORK

W quihn.org
P (07) 5443 9576

HIV FOUNDATION

W hivfoundation.org.au
P (07) 3054 6100

STATEWIDE SERVICES & NZ

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

SA MOBILISATION + EMPOWERMENT FOR SEXUAL HEALTH

W samesh.org.au

TASMANIA

TASMANIAN COUNCIL ON AIDS, HEPATITIS AND RELATED DISEASES

W tascahrd.org.au

P 1800 005 900

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

WA AIDS COUNCIL

W waaid.com

P (08) 9482 0000

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

AIDS ACTION COUNCIL of the ACT

W aidsaction.org.au

P +02 6257 2855

CANBERRA ALLIANCE for HARM MINIMISATION and ADVOCACY

W cahma.org.au

P +02 6279 1670

NORTHERN TERRITORY

NT AIDS & HEPATITIS COUNCIL

W ntahc.org.au

P (08) 8953 3172

NEW ZEALAND

BODY POSITIVE

W bodypositive.org.nz

P +64 800 448 5463

NZ DRUG FOUNDATION

W drugfoundation.org.nz

P +64 800 801 6303



ALCOHOL & DRUG INFORMATION SERVICE (ADIS)

The Alcohol and Drug Information Centres are state and territory-based services that offer information, advice, referral, intake, assessment and support 24 hours a day.

They offer services for individuals, their family and friends, general practitioners, other health professionals and business and community groups.

QUEENSLAND

P 1800 177 833

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

P 1300 131 340

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

P 02 6297 9977

NEW SOUTH WALES

P 02 9361 8000

1800 442 599 (Rural)

NORTHERN TERRITORY

P 1800 131 350

DARWIN

P 08 8922 8399

ALICE SPRINGS

P 08 8951 7580

TASMANIA

P 1800 811 994

HOBART

P 03 9416 1818

VICTORIA

P 1800 888 236

DRUG INFO

P 1300 858 584

FAMILY DRUG HELPLINE

P 1300 660 068

YOUTH SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICE

P 03 9418 1029

1800 014 446 (Rural)



living positive victoria
PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS VICTORIA

This resource was developed in partnership with Living Positive Victoria, who engaged The Institute of Many to conduct an informal survey of their membership and present the findings at a community forum in 2014.

Those findings have directly informed the development of this resource, along with other community consultations facilitated directly by Living Positive Victoria with its members, and other organisations.

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