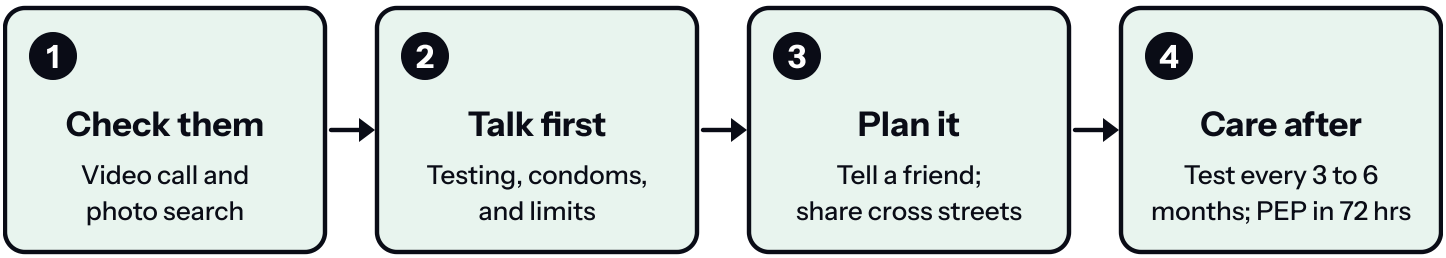
Digital Sex Safety

How to lower the risks of meeting people for sex online, and where to get care.



Before you meet

- Ask for a video call. If they refuse, skip them.
- Run a reverse image search on their photos.
- Ask about other partners, and notice answers that change.

Talk about it

Ask when they last tested and for what, and tell them the same. A screenshot of results can be edited and only covers the time before the test. Say what you want and do not want, and agree on condoms first. You can stop at any point.

Plan the meeting

Meet in public first, or by video. Tell a friend who, where and when you will check in. Send nearby cross streets, then give your address when they arrive. Hide money, keys and valuables.

Protect your photos

Turn off location tags, leave out your face and tattoos, and assume any picture can be saved. If someone threatens to share yours, do not pay. Save the messages, block them, and report it at tips.fbi.gov. StopNCII.org can block copies.

After you meet

Test every 3 to 6 months with new partners, at every body part used. Chlamydia and gonorrhea show after about two weeks. HIV and syphilis can take longer, so test again at 4 to 6 weeks and at 12 weeks. HIV PEP must start within 72 hours; call 311.

If you were hurt

It is not your fault. Go to any emergency room. Anti-Violence Project hotline: 212-714-1141. RAINN: 800-656-4673.

Sources: CDC STI guidelines (cdc.gov/sti); NYC Health Department (nyc.gov); FTC (consumer.ftc.gov). General information, not medical or legal advice. Last checked November 2026. Is something unclear or out of date? Use the contact form on our website and choose Guide feedback.