

The MATCH Framework Expanded

Your Personalized safER Sex Plan

MATCH Your Protection: Fearless, Aware, & Protected | The Harness Project LLC | www.theharnessproject.org

The MATCH framework is the heart of Module 5 – Lesson 13. It provides a flexible, non-prescriptive structure for building a safER sex plan that actually fits your life. No two MATCH plans look the same, and that's exactly the point.

M

MEDICATIONS

The biomedical layer of your plan. Which prescription tools are you currently using or considering?

- **PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis):** Daily oral pill or injectable – for HIV-negative people at ongoing risk
- **PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis):** Emergency medication within 72 hours of potential exposure
- **Doxy-PEP:** Antibiotic within 72 hours for bacterial STI prevention (discuss candidacy with provider)
- **ART (Antiretroviral Therapy):** For people living with HIV – achieving U=U status
- **Vaccines:** HPV, Hepatitis A & B, Mpox – protect against specific infections
- **Questions to ask yourself:** Am I on PrEP? Should I be? When did I last review my options with a provider?

A

AWARENESS

The knowledge and testing layer. Knowing your status – and your partners' – is foundational.

- **Regular HIV testing:** Every 3 months on PrEP; at least annually for others
- **Full STI panel:** Gonorrhea, chlamydia, syphilis, herpes – per your risk level
- **Know your U=U status** if you are living with HIV
- **Partner communication:** How do you learn about your partners' status? What do you share?
- **Home testing options:** MyLabBox, Everlywell, and others – accessible and private
- **Questions to ask yourself:** When was my last test? Am I testing at the right frequency for my life?

T

TOOLS

The physical barrier layer. The tangible objects you use to reduce transmission risk.

- **External condoms:** Highly effective when used correctly and consistently
- **Internal condoms:** More control for many users; compatible with all lubricants
- **Dental dams:** For oral–vaginal and oral–anal contact; easy DIY from a condom
- **Nitrile/latex gloves:** For digital penetration; non–latex options for allergies
- **Lubricant:** Water–based (universal); silicone–based (long–lasting, not for silicone toys)
- **Body–safe toys:** Silicone, ABS plastic, glass — clean between uses; cover with condom when sharing
- **Questions to ask yourself:** Do I have barriers available when I need them? Am I using them consistently?

C

COMMUNICATION

The relational layer. How you talk about sex, health, and protection — before, during, and after.

- **Scripts:** Having ready conversation starters reduces awkwardness (see Lesson 2)
- **Consent as ongoing:** Not a one–time checkbox — check in throughout an encounter
- **Discussing testing:** 'I get tested every [X] months — when was yours?'
- **Introducing barriers:** Normalize barrier use as sexy and caring, not suspicious
- **Fluid bonding negotiation:** If/when you decide to stop using barriers — make it a conscious, mutual decision
- **Questions to ask yourself:** How comfortable am I starting this conversation? What do I want to get better at?

H

HABITS

The routine and sustainability layer. How you maintain your plan over time.

- **Regular testing schedule:** Put it in your calendar — quarterly, semi-annually, or per your risk level
- **Medication adherence:** Daily pills, injection appointments, vaccine boosters — set reminders
- **Restock barriers:** Keep condoms, lube, and dental dams on hand — running out is a common slip
- **Check-ins with partners:** Regular conversations about comfort, health, and needs
- **Self-compassion when plans slip:** Harm reduction is not perfection — it's progress
- **Questions to ask yourself:** What habits am I building? What do I need to make my plan sustainable?

PLAN A — Single, Dating, Higher Risk

M: Daily oral PrEP + HPV vaccine complete + Hep B booster scheduled

A: HIV test + full STI panel every 3 months; ask new partners about their last test

T: External condoms (multiple types on hand) + water-based lube

C: Use the line: 'I get tested every 3 months — when was yours?' before new encounters

H: Restock condoms monthly; PrEP appointment every 90 days; testing is in my calendar

PLAN B — Partnered, Exploring Non-Monogamy

M: PrEP for both partners + Doxy-PEP discussed with provider for group encounters

A: Joint STI testing every 3 months; open communication about all partners' status

T: Internal condoms + dental dams + toys have dedicated condoms for sharing

C: Weekly check-in with primary partner; scripts ready for new partners in group settings

H: Full panel after each new partner encounter; lube always stocked; review plan quarterly

PLAN C — Living with HIV, Serodiscordant Partnership

M: ART — maintaining undetectable status; partner on PrEP; both up to date on vaccines

A: Viral load monitoring every 6 months; partner HIV tests quarterly to confirm status

T: Condoms for additional STI protection (not HIV, given U=U); water-based lube

C: Open conversation about U=U with partner; discussed fluid bonding timeline collaboratively

H: ART adherence app + reminders; joint STI testing appointments; emotional check-ins monthly

PLAN D — Low Frequency Sexual Activity, Lower Ongoing Risk

M: Not currently on PrEP; HPV complete; Hep A/B complete; Mpox vaccine series done

A: HIV test + basic STI panel annually; update frequency if partners or activity changes

T: External condoms for all penetrative contact; have dental dams available

C: Status-neutral conversation with any new partner; willing to ask and answer about testing

H: Annual testing in my phone calendar; condoms in wallet/bag; plan review after any major change

Remember: A MATCH plan is not a test. It is a tool. Revisit it. Revise it. Let it grow with you.

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