

What are the Signs and Symptoms of HIV?

Many people with HIV feel healthy and totally normal, but they can still spread HIV to others. If you do have symptoms, it's easy to mistake them for another illness, like the flu. So many people with HIV don't even know it.

If you do have symptoms, you may experience:

- More colds
- Mouth sores
- Muscle aches
- Shingles (a painful rash)
- Headaches
- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Night sweats
- Weakness, and/or
- Weight loss



Is there a cure for HIV?

There is currently no cure for HIV. Once you have HIV, you have it for life. It does not go away on its own. But HIV can be kept under control by taking medications every day.



How HIV medicines work

HIV medicines work by lowering the amount of HIV in your body, so that the virus can no longer be detected in a blood test.

When the amount of HIV in your body is undetectable, you will not pass the virus on to others. You will also feel strong and healthy.

To benefit from HIV medicines, individuals must first know if they are HIV positive. And the only way to know if you have HIV is by getting tested.

Source:
Parenthood, P. (n.d.). What is HIV? what is AIDS?: How can you get hiv? Planned Parenthood. Retrieved January 9, 2023, from <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/stds-hiv-safer-sex/hiv-aids>

Testing is easy and treatment is available! For peace of mind, talk with your provider or local Tribal health facility for more information about testing and treatment resources near you.



HIV

HIV is an infection that can cause AIDS. It can be spread through sex and sharing needles or tattoo and piercing equipment.



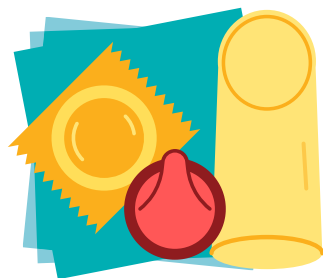
What is HIV?

HIV is a viral infection that causes AIDS. If HIV is not treated, it will weaken your body's ability to protect you from illnesses. Fortunately, there are medicines that can help people with HIV live long, healthy lives.

How is HIV spread?

HIV spreads through semen (cum), pre-cum, vaginal fluids, and blood. You can get it from:

- Having sex – including vaginal, anal, and/or oral sex
- Sharing toothbrushes and razors (blood can be on them)
- Sharing needles and tools for piercings and tattoos



Pregnancy and HIV

If you are pregnant and have HIV, you can pass it to your baby. Though many people living with HIV have healthy pregnancies, untreated HIV during pregnancy can cause serious life-long health concerns for your baby. That's why it's important for pregnant people to get tested for HIV and get treated as soon as possible. We now know that someone living with HIV with an undetectable viral load (less than 200 copies/mL) has a close to zero chance of transmitting HIV to their baby.

Activities that do NOT spread HIV

HIV does NOT spread by:

- Holding hands or hugging
- Coughing or sneezing
- Sitting on toilet seats
- Mosquitos or other insects
- Swimming in public pools, or
- Sharing food or drinks



Are you at risk for HIV?

Anyone who is sexually active can get HIV through vaginal, anal, and/or oral sex. Anyone who injects themselves with needles or is exposed to other peoples' blood through piercings, tattoos, or other activities can get HIV.

Many people with HIV don't know they have the virus until they are tested. That is why it is important to get tested for HIV – even if you feel healthy and totally normal.

How can I prevent HIV?

HIV is spread through semen (cum), pre-cum, vaginal fluids, and blood. So, practicing safer sex is important – whether you are having oral, anal, or vaginal sex.

You can also protect yourself by:

- Using PrEP - a medicine that is very effective at preventing HIV infection
- Using drugs in a safer way (e.g., through not sharing needles or cookers)
- Getting treated for any STIs (they can increase your risk of getting HIV)

Getting tested

Testing for HIV often involves a quick blood test or mouth swab. At home HIV tests are becoming easier to access and can be free of charge. Your provider, pharmacist, or local tribal health facility may be able to help connect you with at home HIV tests.

Luckily, HIV testing is usually quick and easy. To get tested contact your local Tribal clinic, IHS facility, or visit a local clinic.



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