

*If you think
you may be
infected . . .*

GET TESTED!

If you do not have a local
doctor, where can you go
for help?

**For STD Clinic
Referrals Call:**

1-800-232-4636

TTY:

1-888-232-6348

**(In English, and
en Español)**

HIV/AIDS

*Just the
Facts*

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HIV / AIDS

Although many people incorrectly believe that the terms HIV and AIDS mean the same thing, it is important to understand the difference between the two words:

🔔 AIDS (Auto Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is a disease

🔔 HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is the viral infection that causes AIDS

Body fluids that transmit HIV are:

- Blood
- Semen
- Vaginal Secretions
- Breast Milk

The HIV infection which eventually causes AIDS can be acquired in several different ways:

🔔 Unprotected close contact with an infected partner through oral, anal or vaginal sex

🔔 Sharing of contaminated needles or other drug equipment

🔔 Transfusions of contaminated blood or blood clotting factors

🔔 Infected women to their unborn child:

- during pregnancy
- during the birth process
- through breast milk

Once a person has been infected with HIV, the virus attacks the body's immune system, killing the CD4 Cells (also known as the T-helper cells) which help to fight invading organisms and disease.

When an infected person's immune system is effectively destroyed by HIV, he or she develops AIDS.

Although anti-viral drugs have been developed that can extend an infected person's life, if he or she is infected with HIV, it is important to understand that there is no cure for AIDS.

REDUCE THE RISK!

🔔 **Abstinence ... Don't Have ...**

If you don't have any form of sex, you won't be exposed to any Sexually Transmitted Disease, including HIV or AIDS.

🔔 **If You Want To Have Sex ...**

• Use a latex condom correctly and every time you have sex

• Limit your sexual experience to one individual who has been tested for HIV and you know is not infected ... i.e. a mutually "monogamous" relationship

• The more partners you have, the more at risk you are for becoming infected with any STD, including HIV and AIDS.

🔔 **Don't Share Needles or other Drug Equipment.**

- Needles from an infected person can remain in the equipment and be transferred to another person who uses it.
- This includes needles used to shoot drugs, to inject vitamins and steroids, or for tattooing and/or body piercing.

🔔 **If You Are Pregnant, Protect Your Unborn Child.**

- Take a confidential blood test to determine if you have been infected with HIV.
- If you test positively for HIV, drug treatments are available that can reduce the risk of transmitting HIV to your unborn child.

If you think you don't have to protect yourself from AIDS, you are wrong ...

*And you could be **dead** wrong.*

Remember ...

HIV /AIDS is preventable, if the right precautions are taken.