

AIDS / HIV Facts and Issues

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) attacks the human immune system making it unable to fight infection and leaving HIV positive individuals more susceptible to various illnesses. It is present in blood, semen, vaginal secretions, and breast milk. It is not in tears, sweat, urine, or saliva. HIV can only enter the body through fragile tissues called mucous membranes like the mouth, vagina, anus, urethra, eyes, ears and nose. The virus cannot survive outside of the human body and dies when exposed to air or bleach. AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is a clinical diagnosis used to describe someone who is HIV positive AND meets one of the following two criteria:



- 1) Has a history of a seriously weakened immune system (T-cell count below 200)
OR
- 2) Has had of one of 26 'AIDS defining illnesses,' mostly opportunistic infections like Tuberculosis that are generally only found in people with seriously weakened immune systems

Not everyone who is HIV

positive has AIDS.

GLOBAL STATISTICS

- Every minute 9 people are infected
- Each day in 2001, 14,000 were infected, totaling 5 million
- 80% of HIV infection results from heterosexual intercourse
- Each day 8,000 die from AIDS related illness
- 50% of HIV positive individuals don't know they are infected
- 10% of adults 15-49 are HIV positive
- With treatment, a child's chance of getting HIV from its mother is less than 3%
- In China, 67% more people tested positive for HIV in the first six months of 2001 compared to the same period in 2000
- Only 0.01% of those infected in sub-Saharan Africa currently have access to life extending medications
- 7 million adults in South/Southeast Asia are living with HIV/AIDS. Asia is expected to become the center of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the 21st century. The commercial sex trade, needle sharing, and lack of adequate blood screening are issues of particular concern.

"The global HIV/AIDS epidemic is an unprecedented crisis that requires an unprecedented response. In particular it requires solidarity -- between the healthy and the sick, between rich and poor, and above all, between richer and poorer nations. We have 30 million orphans already. How many more do we have to get, to wake up?"

– Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary General

UNITED STATES STATISTICS

- Half of all new infections are in people under 25
- In 2001, there was an 8% increase in new infections after 7 years of decline
- There are over 15,500 people living with HIV/AIDS in Michigan
- On average, medication for an individual living with HIV/AIDS is \$15,000 per year
- Death from AIDS is 10 times higher among African Americans than whites
- 75% of women with HIV age 13-24 are African American or Latina
- AIDS related illness is the leading cause of death for African American men and women age 18-44
- One-third of HIV positive individuals don't know their HIV status
- When used effectively, condoms and other latex barriers are over 99% effective in preventing HIV transmission
- Over half of all U.S. public schools teach abstinence-only education

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Originally thought to affect only what the Center for Disease Control called “The 4 H Club” (Haitians, Heroin Users, Homosexuals, and Hemophiliacs), today we know much more about HIV and AIDS. However, there are still enormous social consequences for people living with HIV/AIDS and there is still no cure. **That does not mean the epidemic cannot be stopped.** With the tools of education and behavior modification, we can make huge progress toward reducing HIV transmission. Through unbiased, honest information and the opportunity to speak candidly and openly without fear of stigmatization, everyone can take control of their health and fight the AIDS epidemic.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS
www.unaids.org

AVERT, Averting HIV & AIDS
www.avert.org

Current Medical Research Information
<http://hivinsite.ucsf.edu/InSite>

General Facts on AIDS / HIV
<http://www.micro.unsw.edu.au/maureen/gen-info.htm>

American Foundation for AIDS Research (amfAR)
<http://www.amfar.org/cgi-bin/iowa/index.html>

CDC – Division of HIV / AIDS Prevention
<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/dhap.htm>

Student Global AIDS Campaign
www.fightglobalaids.org

National AIDS Hotline Crisis Counseling and Information 1-800-342-AIDS

Stop Global AIDS
www.stopglobalaids.org

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http://www.umich.edu/~mserve/ProjectServe/HTML/IEA_aids.html