

HIV 101

Without treatment, HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) can make a person very sick and even cause death. Learning the basics about HIV can keep you healthy and prevent transmission.

HIV CAN BE TRANSMITTED BY



Sexual Contact



Sharing Needles to Inject Drugs



Mother to Baby During Pregnancy, Birth, or Breastfeeding

HIV IS NOT TRANSMITTED BY



Air or Water



Saliva, Sweat, Tears, or Closed-Mouth Kissing



Insects or Pets



Sharing Toilets, Food, or Drinks

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM HIV

- Get tested at least once or more often if you are at risk.
- Use condoms the right way every time you have anal or vaginal sex.
- Choose activities with little to no risk like oral sex.
- Don't inject drugs, or if you do, don't share needles, syringes, or other drug injection equipment.



- If you are at risk for HIV, ask your health care provider if pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is right for you.
- If you think you've been exposed to HIV within the last 3 days, ask a health care provider about post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) right away. PEP can prevent HIV, but it must be started within 72 hours.
- Get tested and treated for other STDs.



KEEP YOURSELF HEALTHY AND PROTECT OTHERS IF YOU HAVE HIV

- Find HIV care. It can keep you healthy and help reduce the risk of transmitting HIV to others.
- Take your HIV medicine as prescribed.
- Stay in HIV care.



- Tell your sex or injection partners that you have HIV. Use condoms the right way every time you have sex, and talk to your partners about PrEP.
- Get tested and treated for other STDs.



For more information, please visit www.cdc.gov/hiv.