



Enrollee Newsletter

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December 1st is World AIDS Day

Community Care Plan, 'the health plan with a heart'

Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is the most difficult phase of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). HIV attacks the body's CD4, or T cells. These cells help the immune system fight infections. Your body cannot get rid of HIV completely. Once you have HIV you have it for life. HIV can be controlled with medicine called antiretroviral therapy (ART). If taken as prescribed, the amount of HIV in the blood (viral load) could become undetectable. Someone with HIV who is treated early could live just about as long as someone without HIV.

How could I get HIV?

HIV is most commonly spread in the United States three ways:

1. Anal sex with someone who has HIV without taking medicines to prevent or treat the HIV or using a condom.
2. Vaginal sex with someone who has HIV without taking medicines to prevent or treat the HIV or using a condom.
3. Sharing equipment used to prep drugs for injection such as syringes or rinse water.

HIV is NOT spread through:

1. Insects.
2. Tears, sweat, and saliva that is not mixed with blood.
3. Closed mouth kissing.
4. Hugging.
5. Shaking hands.
6. Sharing toilets.
7. Sharing dishes.
8. Sexual activities that do not involve body fluid exchange.

HIV has three stages

1. **HIV Infection-Acute:** Flu-like illness may occur 2 to 4 weeks after infection. People may not experience these symptoms or feel sick at all after getting HIV. If you think you could have been exposed during sex or drug use, ask a doctor for a test. To know if you may have been infected with HIV you have to take one of the below two tests:
 - Antigen/antibody test
 - Nucleic acid (NAT) test
2. **HIV Inactivity/Dormancy-Clinical Latency:** Also known as chronic or asymptomatic HIV, HIV is still active in the body but has low levels of reproduction. You may not have any symptoms at this phase. Without taking medicine this phase can last for a decade or longer, with medicine this phase can last many decades. When your viral load goes up and CD4 cell count goes down, you are transitioned to Stage 3.
3. **AIDS:** The HIV phase that is most severe. AIDS damages your immune system so you are at an increased risk for other severe illnesses. Typical survival at this stage is 3 years. A CD4 cell count below 200 cells/mm or certain illnesses diagnose AIDS. A person with AIDS could be very infectious.

Always consult your physician before making changes to your lifestyle or healthcare routine. This information is available for free in other languages. Please contact our customer service number at 1-866-899-4828 /TTY/TDD, 1-855-655-5303, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. ET. Esta información está disponible gratis en otras lenguas. Por favor, contacte a nuestro departamento de servicio al cliente al 1-866-899-4828 TTY/TDD 1-855-655-5303 de Lunes a Viernes desde las 8:00 a.m. a 7:00 p.m. Si ou vie resewva enfomeseyon sa en Kreyol rele nimewo telefon sa 1-866-899-4828 TTY/TDD 1-855-655-5303 Lendi jiska Vandredi de 8:00am a 7:00pm EST.

Pregnancy and HIV

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that all women who are pregnant or planning to become pregnant take as HIV test. The earlier the test is taken HIV can be diagnosed and treated. This can help prevent the spread of HIV to your baby.



If you are pregnant and have HIV:

1. Go to your doctor regularly.
2. Take your HIV medicine as prescribed throughout your pregnancy, labor and delivery. This can protect your partner and your new baby.
3. Give your baby HIV medicine 4-6 weeks after birth.
4. A Cesarean section (C-section) can help reduce the risk of transmittal if your viral load is too high.
5. Do not breastfeed.
6. Do not pre-chew your baby's food.



Sources: www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/whatishiv.html
www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/transmission.html
www.cdc.gov/hiv/group/gender/pregnantwomen/index.html

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