

**PRO-
TECT
YOUR
SELF**

**against
AIDS**

**WHAT
IS
AIDS?**

AIDS is a serious illness caused by the HIV virus. The HIV virus weakens the body's natural defenses against infection. The body is left without protection against diseases that normally do not attack a healthy person.

No one knows if everyone who has the virus will get AIDS. Some people stay healthy for several years while others get a condition called ARC.

AIDS Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

HIV Human Immunodeficiency Virus

ARC AIDS Related Complex

How do You Get AIDS?

You Can Get Aids Through Sexual Contact

AIDS can be transmitted from person to person through sexual contact. If you're a sexually active man or woman, you may become infected with the virus and infect others, even if you have no symptoms.

IV (Intravenous) Drug Users Can Get Aids

AIDS can also be spread by sharing infected needles, syringes or cookers. That's why people who use injected drugs are at great risk of being exposed to the HIV virus and may infect others.

Babies Can Get Aids

The virus may be passed on from a pregnant woman to her unborn baby during pregnancy or during delivery.

The virus may be passed on to a baby in mother's milk. Mothers who suspect that they may have been exposed to the HIV virus should not breast feed their babies.

What About Blood Transfusions?

Before 1985 some people received blood transfusions that contained the virus. That same year a test was developed to find out if blood and blood products to be used in transfusions had been exposed to the HIV virus. Today, there is no need to fear receiving a blood transfusion in the United States.

CAN'T get AIDS this Way

Love And Friendship Do Not Spread Aids

You can't get AIDS from kissing, hugging or touching loved ones, sharing cigarettes or using the same drinking glasses, cups, forks, spoons or dishes. The HIV virus is not spread by sneezing or coughing.

Nothing Around You Can Spread Aids

You can't get AIDS from

- mosquito bites,
- touching door knobs,
- using telephones, toilet seats or swimming pools.

None Of These Things Put You At Risk

You don't have to live in fear. You just have to learn to avoid the risks that present a real danger.

Protect Yourself

MEN

Whatever your sexual preference, always use condoms (preferably latex) during sex.

WOMEN

Don't have sex with any man who doesn't use condoms (preferably latex).

PREVENTION

PREVENTION

EVERYBODY

Don't use drugs

If you do, get help. Sterilize needles and works. Never, ever share needles, syringes, cotton or other works.

Know Your Sexual Partner

- If you're not absolutely sure of his or her sexual activities, both now and in the past, use a condom.
- If you're not absolutely sure if he or she has used intravenous drugs, use a condom.
- If you're not absolutely sure if he or she has received blood transfusions or blood products before 1985, use a condom.

What ARE the Symptoms?

- Fever, chills or night sweats for several weeks with no reason;
- Swollen glands in the neck, underarms or groin for several weeks;
- Persistent dry cough not due to smoking, a cold or flu;
- White spots in the mouth or on the tongue;
- Pink or purple spots (sometimes swollen) anywhere on the body;
- Bleeding for no reason;
- Severe shortness of breath.

First, Talk To A Doctor

The symptoms for AIDS are the same as for many other diseases, even the common cold. You can have these symptoms and not necessarily have the HIV virus. You can also have the virus and not have any symptoms. **Consult your doctor if you have any of these symptoms, since you may have any other illness.**

- Tiredness, dizziness or headaches without reason;
- Sudden weight loss (10 lbs. or more) without dieting;
- Persistent diarrhea;

**For More Information
And Counseling**

New York City Department of Health
(718)485-8111

Hispanic AIDS Forum
(212) 463-8264

**To Find Out About Treatment
For Drug Abuse**

1-800-522-5353

The HISPANIC AIDS FORUM represents the interests of Hispanic persons with AIDS, their family and loved ones, and of the Hispanic community, in light of the AIDS epidemic.

We advocate for the Hispanic community's right to medical and social services and AIDS prevention education that is culturally appropriate, in our language and accessible to all.

We understand that the best defense against AIDS is information that is clear and widely available.

We promote frank and clear discussion of specific measures to prevent HIV infection, so that more of our community members will be free of AIDS.

Persons with AIDS need solid support from family, friends and their community. By informing all Hispanics about AIDS we can reduce fear, ignorance and prejudice and promote our community's support for those affected by AIDS.

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HISPANIC AIDS FORUM

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