

# **Health Care Education**

## **HIV/AIDS**



# **Hidaya Foundation**

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*And when I am sick, then He heals me. - - - Al Quran – Ash-Shuraa, Verse 26:80*

## **HIV/AIDS**

### ***What are HIV and AIDS?***

AIDS stands for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. AIDS is caused by HIV (human immunodeficiency virus). By killing or damaging cells of the body's immune system, HIV progressively destroys the body's ability to fight infections and certain cancers. The term AIDS applies to the most advanced stages of HIV infection.

### ***Why is the immune system so important?***

The immune system is made up a network of special cells, proteins, tissues, and organs which protect the body. This system is the body's defense against any infectious organisms or substances. These infectious conditions are caused by bacteria, viruses, fungi, parasites, and other organisms.

### ***What are the symptoms of HIV/AIDS?***

Once the immune system weakens, a person infected with *HIV* can develop the following symptoms:

- Lack of energy
- Weight loss
- Frequent fevers and sweats
- Persistent or frequent yeast infections
- Persistent skin rashes or flaky skin
- Short-term memory loss
- Mouth, genital, or anal sores from herpes infections.

Some of the common symptoms of *AIDS* include:

- Cough and shortness of breath
- Seizures and lack of coordination
- Difficult or painful swallowing
- Mental symptoms such as confusion and forgetfulness
- Severe and persistent diarrhea
- Fever
- Vision loss
- Nausea, abdominal cramps, and vomiting
- Weight loss and extreme fatigue
- Severe headaches with neck stiffness
- Coma

People with AIDS are prone to develop various cancers such as Kaposi sarcoma, cervical cancer, and cancers of the immune system known as lymphomas.

### ***How is HIV/AIDS spread?***

There are several common ways that *HIV* can be passed from person to person, including:

- Having unprotected sex with someone who is infected
- Using needles or syringes that have been used by people who are infected
- Receiving infected blood products or transplanted organs.
- Transmission from mother to child – An infected mother may pass the virus to her developing fetus during pregnancy, during birth, or through breastfeeding.

### ***How can HIV/AIDS be prevented?***

You can protect yourself from getting HIV by avoiding behaviors that might result in contact

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with infected blood, semen, or vaginal fluids.

- Do not have sex, including oral sex, with anyone who is infected with HIV.
- Find out whether your partner has engaged in high-risk behaviors.
- Avoid alcohol and drugs, which can impair both your judgment and your immune system.
- Do not share intravenous (IV) needles, syringes, cookers, cotton, cocaine spoons, or eyedroppers with others if you use drugs.

#### **Who should get tested for HIV/AIDS?**

If you can answer “YES” to any of these questions, please see your doctor immediately because you might be at risk for *HIV*.

**Please answer the following questions honestly**

Have you had a blood transfusion?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Currently,— have you:		
-Experienced chronic fatigue or tiredness, and rapid weight loss?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
-Had a surgery, including Oral surgery?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
-Had frequent fevers that last for several weeks with no explanation	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
-Had kidney dialysis?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
-Swollen lymph glands	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
-Shared needles, syringes, cookers, or other equipment used to inject drugs	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
-Minor infections that cause skin rashes and mouth, genital, and anal sores	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
-Had a tattoo?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
-Had a body piercing (nose, ears, etc.)?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
-Had multiple sex partners or had sex with some one who fits the above description?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>

Does your work put you in contact with blood, blood products or needles? **Yes No**

#### **How do you kill HIV/AIDS Virus?**

HIV/AIDS can be killed by sterilization. Disinfect work surfaces with sodium hypochlorite solution.

#### **Aids and Pakistan:**

According to UNAIDS (United Nations Programme on AIDS) estimates, 70,000 to 80,000 persons, or 0.1 percent of the adult population in Pakistan, are infected with HIV. As in many countries, the numbers may be underreported -- mainly due to the social stigma attached to the infection, limited surveillance and voluntary counseling and testing systems, as well as the lack of knowledge among the general population and health practitioners.

Data analysis indicates that most infections occur between ages of 20-44 years, with men outnumbering females by a ratio 5:1. The trends are closely similar to other countries affected by HIV/AIDS. By September 2003, sexual transmission accounted for the majority of reported cases (67%). Other modes of transmission included: infection through contaminated blood and blood products (7%); injecting drug abuse (1%); and mother to child transmission (3%).

Situation updates in 2005 by various agencies such as the UNAIDS report an “outbreak” of HIV among injecting drug users (IDU) in Larkana, Sindh, where, out of 170 people tested, more than 20 were found HIV positive. In Karachi, a 2004 survey of Sexually Transmitted Infections among high risk groups found that more than one in five IDUs was infected with HIV.

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Sources: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, September 2006, the Nemours Foundation 1995-2007. WebMD 2005-2007, UNDP 2006, and information available freely on the Internet.

**Please note:** All information provided in this flyer is posted for educational purposes only; it is not meant to be used as medical advice. For any advice, diagnosis, and treatment consult your personal physician