

What are HIV and AIDS?

HIV:

- HIV is the virus that can lead to AIDS.
- HIV damages certain kinds of blood cells that are needed to help the body fight diseases.
- A person with HIV does not always have symptoms, so it is important to get tested to find out if you have HIV.

AIDS:

- AIDS is the late stage of HIV infection.
- A person's immune system is very damaged and has trouble fighting diseases.
- With certain medicines and by seeing your provider, a person with HIV can live much longer and never develop AIDS.

There is no cure for HIV or AIDS. Learn to protect yourself and lower your risks.



Ask Your Healthcare Provider:

- ✓ Am I at risk for HIV?
- ✓ How can I lower my risk for giving or getting HIV/AIDS?
- ✓ How often should I be tested for HIV?

Write your questions down before you go into the office

There is no cure for HIV and AIDS, so it's important to learn the facts so that you can protect yourself. If you have HIV or AIDS there are steps you can take to keep yourself healthy longer and prevent spreading HIV to others. Get tested and talk to your healthcare provider about your risks.

HIV & AIDS



What are the facts about HIV and AIDS?



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Who can get HIV/AIDS?

Anyone can get HIV. Age, gender, and sexual orientation does not affect whether you can get HIV. It is your **actions** that increase your risk of getting HIV.

HIV is not spread by:

- Air or water
 - Sitting next to someone
 - Using a restroom, water cooler, or telephone
 - Eating in a restaurant
 - Swimming in a pool or using a hot tub
- Casual contact
 - Shaking hands or giving a hug
- Saliva, tears or sweat
 - Closed-mouth or “social” kissing
- Being bitten by a mosquito or other insect
- Donating blood

HIV can be spread by:

- Unprotected sex (vaginal, anal, or oral sex)
- Having many sex partners or having other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) can increase risk
- Sharing needles, syringes or other equipment used to inject drugs
- A mother to her child during pregnancy, birth, or breast-feeding

How can I lower my risk?

There are ways to help lower your risk of getting or giving HIV, including:

- Don't share or reuse needles or syringes.
- Practice safe sex. Use condoms and have fewer partners.
- Always use a condom properly.

It only takes one contact with the HIV virus to get HIV. Learn how to protect yourself.



Should I have an HIV test?

It is important to know your HIV status.

Knowing you are HIV Positive as early as possible can help you get necessary medical care, medications to manage your HIV and help you to reduce the risk of spreading HIV to others.

Knowing you are HIV Negative will help you make better choices about your risks for getting HIV.

HIV Counseling, Testing and Referral are available.

Ask your provider about testing, or call:
(203) 503-3151

