

MH19D14542

Native American Women's
Health Education
Resource Center



HIV AIDS

Know the facts about:

Acquired
Immune
Deficiency
Syndrome

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What is AIDS?

Aids was first diagnosed in the United States in 1981. It is caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) which impairs the body's ability to fight infections -hence the name Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

A

CQUIRED

Refers to a disease that is not genetic, inherited or contracted from the environment.

I

MMUNE

Refers to the body's system of protection against any particular disease.

D

EFFICIENCY

Refers to a gap in the body's system of protection against any particular disease.

S

YNDROME

Refers to a set of symptoms which occur together.

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 are sexually active, 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 or syringes. That's why people who use injected drugs are at great risk of being exposed to the HIV virus and may infect others. That includes insulin needles and syringes.

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.

You can't get AIDS this way.

Love And Friendship Do Not Spread AIDS

You can't get AIDS from kissing, hugging, shaking hands, 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.

**Yes, AIDS is
a problem among
Native Americans!**

What are the symptoms?

- √ Fever, chills or night sweat 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 or on the tongue;
- √ Pink or purple spot (sometimes swollen) anywhere on the body;
- √ Bleeding for no reason;
- √ Severe shortness of breath;
- √ Tiredness, dizziness or headaches without reason;
- √ Sudden weight loss (10 lbs. or more) without dieting;
- √ Persistent diarrhea.

Talk to a doctor if you have any of these symptoms.

Protect Yourself

MEN

***Whatever your sexual preference, always use latex condoms during sex.**

WOMEN

***Don't have sex with any man who doesn't use latex condoms.**

***Condoms lubricated with the spermicide Nonoxynol-9 are recommended.**

Help Fight AIDS!

The best defense against AIDS
is correct information.

Talk to your children, friends,
and to your companions.

*Please use condoms.
It could mean the difference
between life and death!*



People with AIDS need to know that you care, they need support from family, friends and the community!

By informing Native Americans about AIDS, we can reduce the fear, ignorance and promote compassion for those living with AIDS!

