

STD Facts

HIV Infection and AIDS (caused by human immunodeficiency virus or HIV)

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

HIV/AIDS Symptoms:

Early (weeks to months after exposure)

- Flu-like illness
- Swollen lymph nodes

Late (years after exposure)

- Persistent fevers
- Night sweats
- Prolonged diarrhea
- Unexplained weight loss
- Purple bumps on skin or inside mouth and nose
- Chronic fatigue
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Recurrent respiratory infections

Note: These symptoms are not specific for HIV and may have other causes. Most persons with HIV have no symptoms at all for several years.

TRANSMISSION

HIV is Spread by:

- Vaginal sex
- Oral sex
- Anal sex
- Sharing needles to inject drugs, body piercing or tattooing
- Contaminated blood products (rare)
- Infected mother to newborn

HIV Infection Cannot Be Spread By:

- Shaking hands
- A kiss
- Cups
- Animals
- Hugging
- Swimming pools
- Toilet seats
- Food
- Insects
- Coughing

COMPLICATIONS/CONSEQUENCES

Consequences of AIDS:

- Currently no cure available; most people eventually die from the disease (most live about 10 years after infection)
- Spread to other sex partners and persons sharing needles

PREGNANCY AND HIV/AIDS:

- HIV can be passed to unborn children from infected mother during pregnancy or childbirth
- Infected mother may infect infant through breast milk (rare)

PREVENTION

Recommendations to Reduce the Spread of HIV:

- Latex condoms, when used consistently and correctly, are highly effective in preventing the transmission of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.
- Always use latex condoms during vaginal and anal sex
- Use a latex condom for oral sex on a penis
- Use a latex barrier for oral sex on a vagina or anus (dental dam or condom cut in half)
- Limit or avoid use of drugs and alcohol
- Don't share drug needles, cotton or cookers
- Don't share needles for tattooing or piercing
- Limit the number of sex partners
- Tests are available to detect antibodies for HIV through physicians, STD clinics, and HIV counseling and testing sites
- Notify sex and needle-sharing partners immediately if HIV-infected

TREATMENT

Treatment of HIV/AIDS:

- No treatment or medication available to cure HIV/AIDS
- Early diagnosis and treatment can prolong life for years
- Medications and treatments available to keep immune system working
- Medications available to treat AIDS related illnesses
- Medications available for HIV infected pregnant women to greatly reduce the chance of infection to newborn
- Experimental drug trials to test new medications

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Nevada State Health Division
Bureau of Community Health
HIV/AIDS STD TB Hepatitis Program
505 East King Street, Room 103
Carson City, Nevada 89701
(775) 684-5902

CDC National STD and AIDS Hotlines
1-800-342-AIDS; 1-800-243-7889 TTY