

WORLD AIDS DAY December 1

AIDS AIDS AIDS AIDS AIDS AIDS AIDS AIDS AIDS AIDS

AID?

What is AIDS?

What causes AIDS?

AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

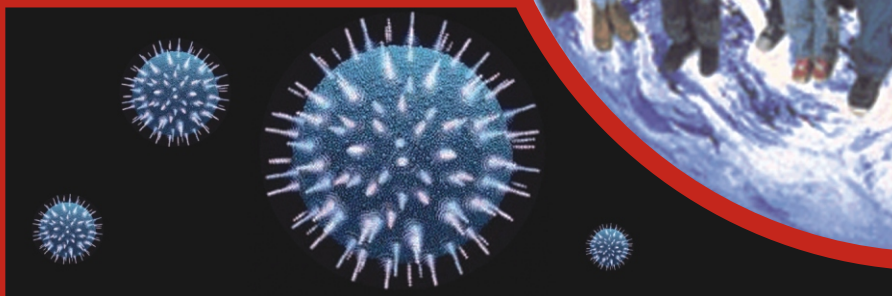
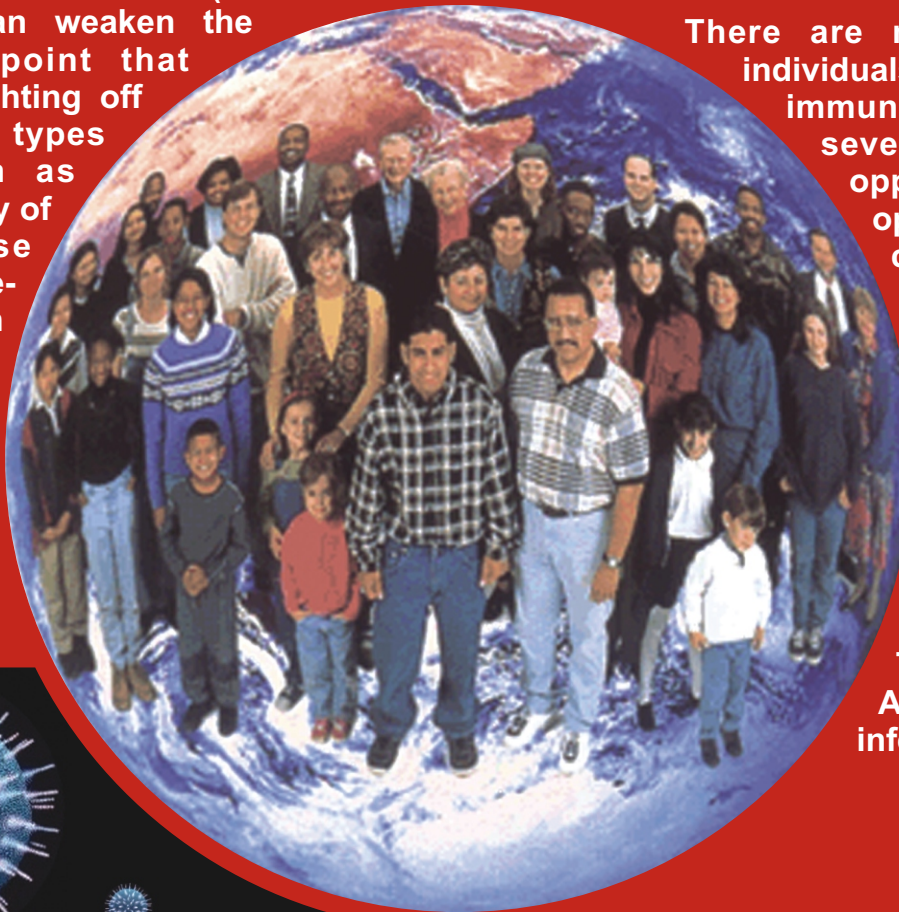
An HIV-positive person receives an AIDS diagnosis after developing one of the CDC-defined AIDS indicator illnesses. An HIV-positive person can also receive an AIDS diagnosis on the basis of certain blood tests (CD4 counts) and may not have experienced any serious illnesses. A positive HIV test does not mean that a person has AIDS. A diagnosis of AIDS is made by a physician according to the CDC AIDS Case Definition.

Over time, infection with HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) can weaken the immune system to the point that the system has difficulty fighting off certain infections. These types of infections are known as opportunistic infections. Many of the infections that cause problems or that can be life-threatening for people with AIDS are usually controlled by a healthy immune system. The immune system of a person with AIDS has weakened to the point that medical intervention may be necessary to prevent or treat serious illness.



What are the Symptoms of AIDS?

There are no common symptoms for individuals diagnosed with AIDS. When immune system damage is more severe, people may experience opportunistic infections (called opportunistic because they are caused by organisms which cannot induce disease in people with normal immune systems, but take the "opportunity" to flourish in people with HIV). Most of these more severe infections, diseases and symptoms fall under the Centers for Disease Control's definition of full-blown "AIDS." The median time to receive an AIDS diagnosis among those infected with HIV is 7-10 years.



How is HIV Transmitted?

HIV can be transmitted from an infected person to another through:

- Blood (including menstrual blood)
- Semen
- Vaginal secretions
- Breast milk

Blood contains the highest concentration of the virus, followed by semen, followed by vaginal fluids, followed by breast milk.

* Activities That Allow HIV Transmission:

- Unprotected sexual contact
- Direct blood contact, including injection drug needles, blood transfusions, accidents in health care settings or certain blood products
- Mother to baby (before or during birth, or through breast milk)
- Sexual intercourse
- Oral sex
- Sharing injection needles

The following "bodily fluids" are NOT infectious:

- Saliva
- Tears
- Sweat
- Feces
- Urine

THINK
BEFORE YOU
START
SHOOT
SHARE



STAY CAREFUL.
STAY ALIVE.

