



HIV FACTS



What does HIV mean?

Human Immunodeficiency Virus

- HIV only infects humans.
- HIV cannot live outside the human body.
- HIV can infect any human- no matter your age, lifestyle, or cultural background.
- HIV attacks our immune system- the system that keeps our body healthy.
- There is no cure for the HIV virus.

How is HIV transmitted?

There are four main body fluids that can transmit HIV:

- Blood
- Semen/Pre-cum
- Vaginal fluid
- Breast milk

How do I know if I am at risk of getting the HIV virus or passing the HIV virus?

The transmission/infection equation is one way to figure out if you are or have been at risk of passing on the HIV virus or getting the HIV virus:

HIV positive body fluid
(blood, menstrual blood, semen/pre-cum, vaginal fluids, breast milk)



Direct access to the bloodstream
(tears, cuts, intravenous needles, anus, vagina, penis)



Risk activity
(unprotected anal or vaginal sex, sharing needles, sharing sex toys, unsafe tattooing)



Possibility of HIV Infection or Transmission

Can I get the HIV virus or pass the HIV virus through other body fluids?

If not mixed with HIV positive body fluid you cannot get the HIV virus or pass on the HIV virus from

- Saliva
- Tears
- Urine

SO you cannot pass on the HIV virus or get the HIV virus from sharing things like:

- Cups
- Plates
- Forks/Knives/Spoons
- Kisses
- Hugs
- Bathrooms
- Towels
- Swimming pools

HIV in B.C. and around the world has touched every population including:

- Heterosexual people
- Aboriginal people
- Youth
- Older adults
- Injection drug users
- Sex trade workers
- Gay/bi-sexual men
- People with low and high incomes
- Prison inmates

This reminds us that everyone is at risk

Often the people most at risk for HIV infection and transmission are also living with issues of poverty, abuse, inadequate housing, access to good quality health care, lack of employment and many other factors that increase a person's vulnerability to HIV infection and transmission

How can I protect myself from getting the HIV virus or passing the HIV virus?

There are several ways that we can reduce our risk of getting the HIV virus or passing on the HIV virus:

- Practice safer sex
- Use a condom
- Don't share your sex toys
- Don't share your needles
- Get tested regularly for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases
- Educate yourself and those around you about the HIV basics

For more detailed information:

- HIV virus
- Places where you can get tested
- Where to find counseling
- Tips on how to protect yourself
- How and where to get free condoms/lube/needles
- Support groups
- Community resources
- How you can get involved

See left hand side of this page for further details

Please contact any of the following organizations:

- B.C. Persons With AIDS Society
www.bcpwa.org
Phone: 604.893.2220
Toll Free- 1.800.994.2437
- AIDS Vancouver
www.aidsvancouver.org
Phone: 604.893.2201
- Healing Our Spirit- B.C. Aboriginal AIDS Society
www.healingourspirit.org
Phone: 604.879.8884
Toll Free: 1.866.745.8884
- YouthCo AIDS Society
www.youthco.org
Phone: 604.688.1441



www.bcpwa.org

From the B.C. Persons with AIDS Society (BCPWA)