

HIV

What is HIV?

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is the virus that causes AIDS. This virus may be passed from one person to another through infected blood, semen, vaginal secretions, or breast milk.

How do you get HIV?

- having unprotected vaginal, anal, or oral sex (sex without a condom) with someone who has HIV.
- sharing a needle to inject drugs or sharing drug works with someone who has HIV.
- having a mother who was infected with HIV when you were born.
- from a blood transfusion (However, it is unlikely you got infected that way because all blood in the United States has been tested for HIV since 1985).

How can HIV be prevented?

Abstinence is the only 100% full-proof method of not contracting HIV or be in a long-term mutually monogamous relationship. However, latex condoms, when used consistently and correctly, can reduce the risk of transmission of HIV; as well as avoiding any unprotected contact with HIV infected bodily fluid.

How is HIV diagnosed?

Diagnosing HIV can be done using blood, saliva, or by using cells from the inside of the cheek. Because HIV carries such stigma and prejudices, great care is taken to protect the identity of those being tested.

How do I get an HIV test?

HIV tests can use blood or saliva to detect HIV infection. Some tests take a few days or weeks for results, but rapid HIV tests can give results in about 20 minutes. All positive HIV tests must be followed up by another test to confirm the positive result.

How is HIV treated?

At this time, there is no cure for HIV, but medications are effective in fighting HIV and its complications. Treatments are designed to reduce HIV in your body, keep your immune system as healthy as possible and decrease the complications you may develop.

How common is HIV?

As of December 31, 2007, there were approximately 4,521 people living with HIV/AIDS in Oklahoma. Of these cases 2,274 were HIV Infections and 2,247 were AIDS cases. The largest proportion of HIV cases are ages 20-29 years (37%), followed by ages 30-39 years (36%).

Where can I get more information?

Oklahoma State Department of Health
HIV/STD Service
1000 N.E. Tenth, Room 614
Oklahoma City, OK 73117-1299
Phone: (405) 271-4636
Fax: (405) 271-5149
www.health.ok.gov

Division of STD Prevention (DSTDP)
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/std

CDC-INFO Contact Center
1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)
Email: cdcinfo@cdc.gov

Your sexual partner(s) should be tested for HIV even if they have no symptoms. If you have been diagnosed with HIV, you should have a blood test in three months to detect blood-borne infections you might have contracted at the time you had HIV.

What are the symptoms of HIV?

The following **may be** warning signs of advanced HIV infection:

- rapid weight loss.
- dry cough.
- recurring fever or profuse night sweats.
- profound and unexplained fatigue.
- swollen lymph glands in the armpits, groin, or neck.
- diarrhea that lasts for more than a week.
- white spots or unusual blemishes on the tongue, in the mouth, or in the throat.
- pneumonia.
- red, brown, pink, or purplish blotches on or under the skin or inside the mouth, nose, or eyelids.
- memory loss, depression, and other neurological disorders.
- in women, re-occurring vaginal yeast infections that are hard to treat.

When will the symptoms appear?

The only way to know if you are infected is to be tested for HIV infection. You cannot rely on symptoms to know whether or not you are infected. Many people who are infected with HIV do not have any symptoms at all for 10 years or more. Symptoms can appear anywhere from a few months to a few years after contact. If you think you are at risk for HIV, get tested regularly.



Oklahoma State
Department of Health
Creating a State of Health

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Facts & Information