



## human immunodeficiency virus

### Anyone can get it.

**Since it first appeared, HIV has become a frightening problem for everyone, regardless of their race, sex, lifestyle or age. In fact, young people are the fastest growing group in the HIV epidemic.**

- The number of teens and young adults with HIV has increased by almost 80% in the last few years.
- In that time, the number of young girls with HIV has doubled.
- Every thirteen seconds, a teenager in this country contracts a sexually transmitted disease, like AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency virus).

#### Ways You Can Get HIV:

- by having sex with an infected person, including vaginal, anal and oral sex
- by sharing needles with an infected person during drug or steroid injection, "skin popping" or tattooing
- by using alcohol or other drugs judgement is impaired, leading to risky behaviors that can spread HIV

#### Ways You Can't:

- touching, hugging or taking care of someone who has HIV
- being exposed to coughs or sneezes from an infected person
- sharing forks, knives spoons or drinking glasses
- eating food prepared by someone who has HIV
- using water fountains, telephones or toilets
- from mosquitoes and other insects

Casual Contact  
Cannot  
Spread HIV.

People become infected with HIV  
because of what they do, not because  
of who they are. Anyone who engages  
in risky behavior can get the virus.

Drugs & HIV  
are connected.

Knowing the facts and explaining them to others is the best defense we have against HIV. Anyone can protect themselves by making a smart, careful decision.

Take  
Control

Take  
Action

Prevent  
HIV



How you can get it. How you can't get it. How you can prevent it.



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### How you can prevent it.

**Because HIV is only transmitted during certain activities, preventing the spread of the virus is easier than most people think. Refusing alcohol and other drugs and abstaining from sex will practically guarantee your safety from HIV.**

**You're In Control!**

#### Benefits of Abstinence:

- protection from HIV
- protection from sexually transmitted diseases, including herpes, chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis
- total protection from unwanted pregnancy
- time to learn about the physical and emotional responsibilities of sexual relationships
- power over your own body
- freedom from the guilt and confusion that many people feel after rushing into sex

#### Benefits of Staying Drug-Free:

- protection from HIV
- ability to make smart decisions in a sensible state of mind
- some protection from drug and alcohol related accidents
- control over your own life, without the fear of addictive drugs taking that control away
- freedom from drug-related legal problems

**Sex is more risky than ever before. If a person does become sexually active, they should only do so with one mutually faithful partner. More than one partner increases the risk of HIV infection. Since no one can be sure about all of their partner's activities, a latex condom should also be used every time they have sex. Condoms do provide protection against HIV, especially when they're used with a spermicide, such as nonoxynol-9.**

### You can decide.

**You are in charge of your own body. You have the power to refuse anything that feels dangerous or uncomfortable. By keeping a few things in mind, you can avoid pressure situations before they get the best of you.**

#### Always Stay Away From:

- unsupervised parties where drugs are being used
- friends with a reputation for causing trouble
- isolated places like an empty house or a parked car
- people who use guilt or bribery to control others

#### Remember To:

- leave any situation that feels unsafe
- keep your cell phone nearby or spare change and phone numbers handy, in case you need a ride home
- be assertive and stand up for your rights to refuse sex and drugs

**Talking honestly about HIV and your own feelings can help. If you're having a relationship, it also helps to set limits on your physical behavior. Knowing what to expect from the beginning can lessen problems with sexual pressure and even help your relationship grow stronger.**

**Watch For Pressure Situations.**

**Lots of kids are learning how to say "no" to sex and drugs without losing their friends' respect.**