

WELL-BEING >>>

Staying healthy in body, brain, and spirit is a life-long journey. Learn strategies to improve your own well-being with steps to security, health and prosperity.



HIV & AIDS

The first reporting of what will be known as AIDS occurred on June 5, 1981 and has existed in the US since the mid to late 70s. An estimated 84.2 million people have become infected with HIV and approximately 40.1 million people have died from AIDS-related illnesses since the start of the epidemic. World AIDS Day, December 1st, was commemorated 34 years ago.

What is HIV/AIDS?

The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a virus that attacks the body's immune system. If HIV is left untreated, it can lead to acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). The weakened immune system is now more vulnerable to bacteria, viruses or other agents that cause disease, and the body is less able to fight off infections. You cannot get AIDS without first having HIV.

How is HIV spread?

HIV is transmitted by contact with bodily fluids such as blood, breastfeeding, vaginal fluid and semen. Contact with bodily fluids can happen during sexual contact, pregnancy and birth, sharing needles, and blood transfusions though this is rare now due to thorough testing.

How to prevent an HIV infection?

- Abstinence
- Never share needles
- Condom use with every sexual contact
- PrEP medication (pre-exposure prophylaxis)
- PEP medication (post-exposure prophylaxis)
- Take HIV medication during pregnancy to reduce risk of transmitting to fetus if HIV positive
- Not breastfeeding if HIV positive

What are the symptoms of HIV?

Most people have flu-like symptoms 2 to 4 weeks after infection, symptoms can last for a few days or several weeks. These symptoms are similar to other illnesses and these symptoms alone doesn't mean you have HIV. Some people have no symptoms.

- Fever
- Sore throat
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Rash
- Muscle aches
- Night sweats
- Mouth ulcers
- Chills
- Fatigue



What is PrEP?

PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) is medicine that reduces your chances of getting HIV from sex or injection drug use. PrEP is highly effective for preventing HIV when taken as prescribed. Two pills are approved for PrEP use- Truvada and Descovy.

Apretude is the only injectable medication approved for PrEP use. PrEP is available by prescription from your healthcare provider.

What is PEP?

PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis) is medicine taken to prevent HIV after a possible exposure. PEP should be used only in emergency situations and must be started within 72 hours after a recent possible exposure to HIV. If you are in need of PEP, speak to a healthcare provider as soon as possible, every hour counts.

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