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Kerala State AIDS Control Society  
State Council of Educational Research and Training



# Why we are talking on this ?

**Adolescence is a time of transition from child to young.**

**During adolescence, there are bodily changes and emotional and mental changes.**

**Increase in the body weight and height, genitals develop, body hair appears and other physical changes are also seen in both boys and girls.**

**Adolescence is also the time for making friends, taking decisions and stating your mind, as well as for expanding relationships.**



**Negative influencers easily mislead many adolescents.**

**Adolescents have low awareness and knowledge regarding Sexual and Reproductive Health.**



**The period is susceptible to taking risks and experimenting with their body. This can lead to drug and substance abuse, unsafe sexual practices, risk of exposure to Reproductive Tract Infections and Sexually Transmitted Diseases and even HIV/AIDS**



# STIs

**WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW  
CAN HURT YOU OR WORSE**

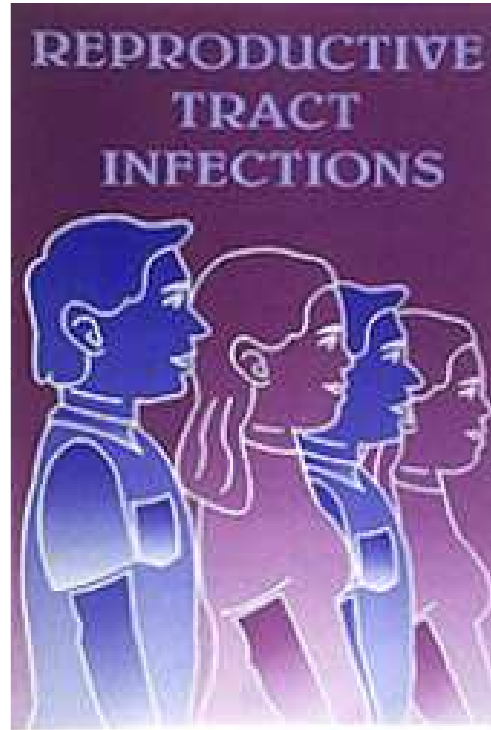


# RTI

REPRODUCTIVE TRACT INFECTIONS



**RTIs are the different types of infections which affect the genital organs.**



**These infections affect the reproductive system of both males and females.**

**Most complaints of RTIs are not sexually transmitted. This happens due to the change in the normal protective layer in the tract.**

**Usually this is caused by virus, bacteria and protozoa and influenced by environment, hygiene, hormonal and other factors.**

## Type of Infections in Women

RTIs refer to three different types of infections which affect the reproductive tract



*Endogenous infections* are probably the most common RTIs worldwide. They result from an overgrowth of organisms normally present in the vagina. Endogenous infections include bacterial vaginosis and candidiasis. These infections can be easily treated and cured.

*Iatrogenic infections* occur when the cause of infection (a bacterium or other micro-organism) is introduced into the reproductive tract through a medical procedure such as menstrual regulation, induced abortion, the insertion of an IUD or during childbirth. This can happen if surgical instruments used during the procedure have not been properly sterilized, or if an infection that was already present in the lower reproductive tract is pushed through the cervix into the upper reproductive tract.

*Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)* are caused by viruses, bacteria, or parasitic micro-organisms that are transmitted through sexual activity with an infected partner. About 30 different sexually transmitted infections have been identified, some of which are easily treatable, many of which are not. HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, is perhaps the most serious sexually transmitted infection as it eventually leads to death. STIs affect both men and women, and can also be transmitted from mothers to children during pregnancy and childbirth.

## Type of Infections in Men



**RTIs in men are easier to identify and treat, as they are more likely to be symptomatic.**

**Early signs of infection in men are from urethritis. This causes pain or burning upon urination and often a discharge from the tip of the penis.**

**Ulcers and sores indicate other kinds of reproductive tract infections in men.**



# ABC OF SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

**STI's are infections that are spread from person to person through intimate sexual contact. It may affect sexual organs and other physiological systems.**



**Cultural ,Social and Physiological Causes of spreading STIs are**

- **Poor knowledge and lack of awareness about STIs, its seriousness and of the signs and symptoms.**
- **Both patients and doctors find it difficult to discuss sexuality and STIs openly.**
- **Many STIs patients, particularly women are asymptomatic.**

## Symptoms of RTI/STIs

- vaginal discharge, Urethral discharge, Genital ulcer, backache and lower abdominal pain. Persons usually complain of having more than one symptom. All these infections can be treated only after a doctor examines the person and some laboratory tests are conducted on them.
- Apart from being serious diseases on their own, the presence of an untreated STI/RTI can increase the risk of HIV infection and transmission.
- It is important to know that all sexually transmitted infections are not Reproductive Tract Infections and all Reproductive Tract Infections are not all Sexually Transmitted Infections.



## STIs - Symptoms in Men and Women



### WOMEN

An unusual discharge from vagina with unpleasant odor.

Pain in pelvic area

Burning or itching near vagina

Bleeding from vagina

Frequent/painful urination

Urethral infection

Cervical infection

Painful sore on Vagina

Painless ulcers in genital area.



### MEN

Pus-like discharge from penis

Discomfort with urination

Pain during urination

Painful sore on penis

Painless ulcers in genital area

Itching, pain or discharge from anus

***Remember:***

**Sometimes symptoms don't show up for weeks or months.**



## The most common STIs are

- Chlamydia
- Trichomoniasis
- Chancroid,
- Genital warts
- Gonorrhoea
- Hepatitis B
- Herpes simplex
- Syphilis
- HIV/AIDS





## Diagnosis and Treatment

- They can be diagnosed through medical examination and various laboratory procedures
  - If not treated adequately at the initial stage, the first symptoms disappear but the microbes remain inside the body and may cause various complications making a person suffer throughout life
  - Most of the STIs can be cured through initial diagnosis and proper treatment.
- Some STI's are diagnosed by taking a swab of the vagina or penis for secretions.
  - Other STI's can be diagnosed by looking at the sores or bumps on the genitals.
  - Some STI's are diagnosed by testing blood.

## Prevention



- Because so many STIs go undiagnosed or have no treatments available, preventing their transmission is crucial. Risk can be reduced through the adoption of safer behaviors by individuals.
- Encouragement of these behaviors should then be incorporated into programs and policy.

## STI infected due to

- Unprotected sexual intercourse
- Some STIs may be transmitted by the infected mother to her child during pregnancy and at childbirth
- HIV and Hepatitis B can also be spread by sharing of needles, receiving infected blood.





## How do I know if I have an STI... ?



- Most people who have an STI have no symptoms. A test from your health care provider or local health clinic may be the only way to tell for sure if you are infected.
- If you do become infected, symptoms may appear right away. Or, they may not show up for weeks or months or even years. They may come and go. Even if the signs and symptoms go away, you can still infect other people if you have sex with them. Or, they can still infect you!

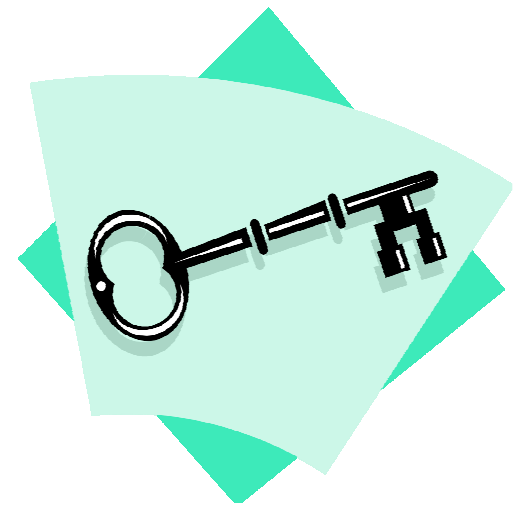
## What Happens if I don't get treated?

- If you have an STI and don't get treatment you can have some long-term effects such as:
  - Infertility (Unable to have babies)
  - Cancer
  - Long-term pain
  - Can pass disease from mother to baby
  - Death



## Prevention is the Key

- Abstinence, or not having any type of sex is the best way to protect yourself.
- It is possible to get an STD even without having intercourse through skin-to-skin contact.

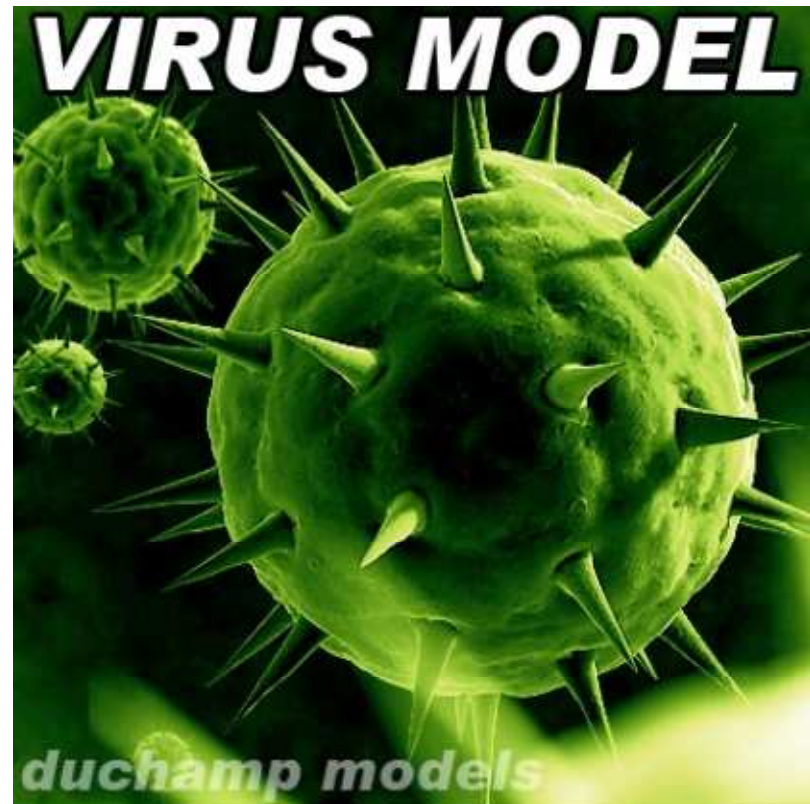






## WHAT IS A VIRUS?

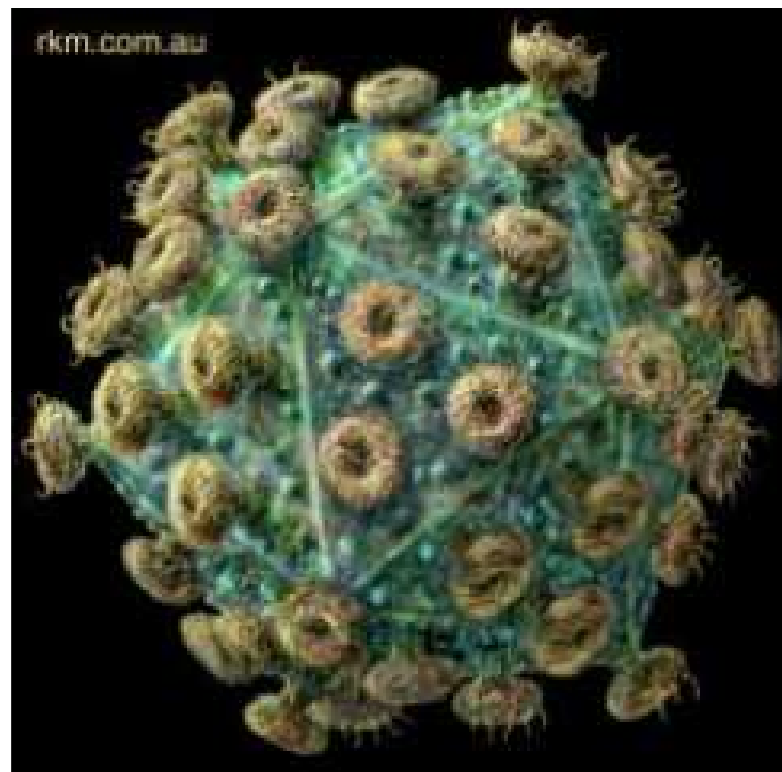
- Virus is a **non-cellular DNA** or **RNA** with **protein shell**.
- It **cannot reproduce** without a **living host**.
- It remains **dormant** outside.
- Once it enters the body, it uses leg like appendages to **clamp onto a cell** and a spike to **penetrate the cell wall**.
- Once inside a living cell, a virus **replaces the cell's original DNA** or **RNA** and **commands with its own genetic instructions** and make as many **copies of virus** as possible.



# WHAT IS HIV?

# HIV IS

- **HUMAN**
- **IMMUNODEFICIENCY**
- **VIRUS**



It is the virus that causes AIDS. When someone is HIV-positive, it means the person has the human immunodeficiency virus in his or her body or blood.

# What is AIDS

**AIDS means Acquired Immuno Deficiency syndrome**

**Acquired** – Not genetically inherited but contracted from somebody.

**Immune Deficiency** – Inadequacy of the body's defense mechanism to fight external disease causing organisms.

**Syndrome** – Not just one disease or symptom but a group of diseases and symptoms present in the body.

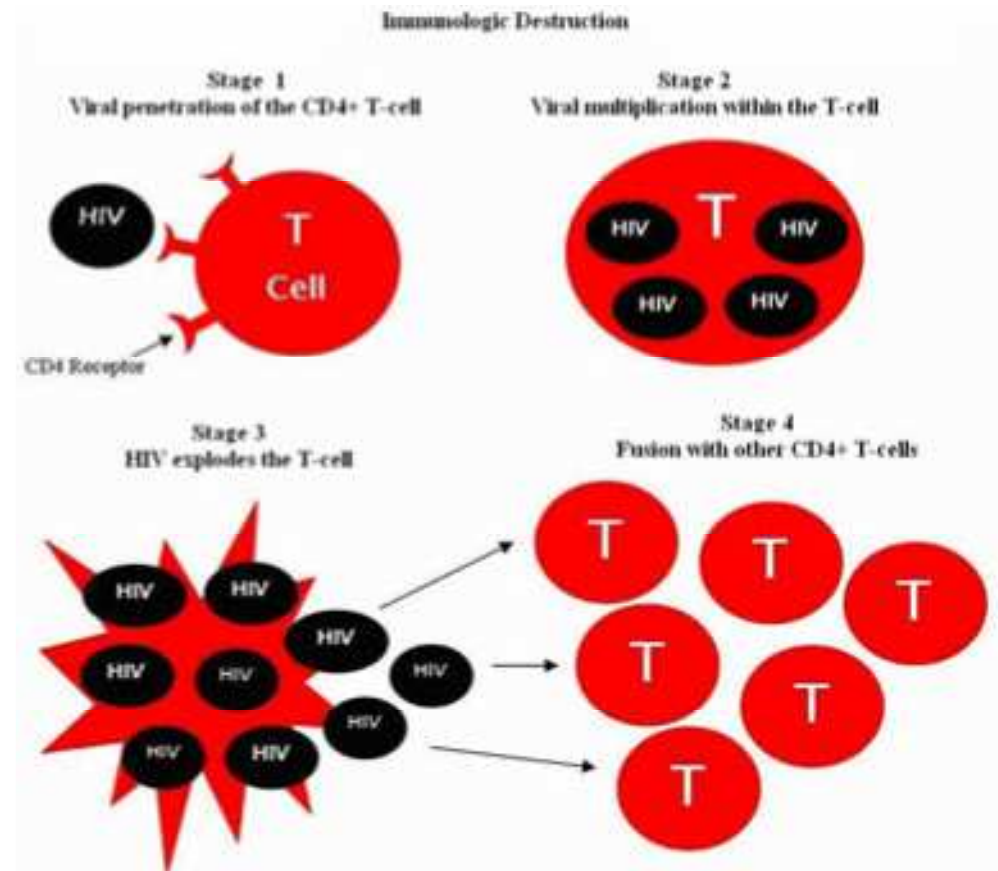
## Difference between HIV and AIDS

HIV is the name of the virus and AIDS is the name of infection caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).



## How it affects Human Body

- HIV infects specific white blood cells, which call CD-4 (T) cells, the essential part of the body's immune system.
- HIV attacks and inactivates these particular kinds of white blood cells.
- Gradually, the body becomes too weak to fight infections and diseases.
- This leads to serious illnesses and infections. When this happens, HIV infection becomes AIDS.



## Opportunistic Infections

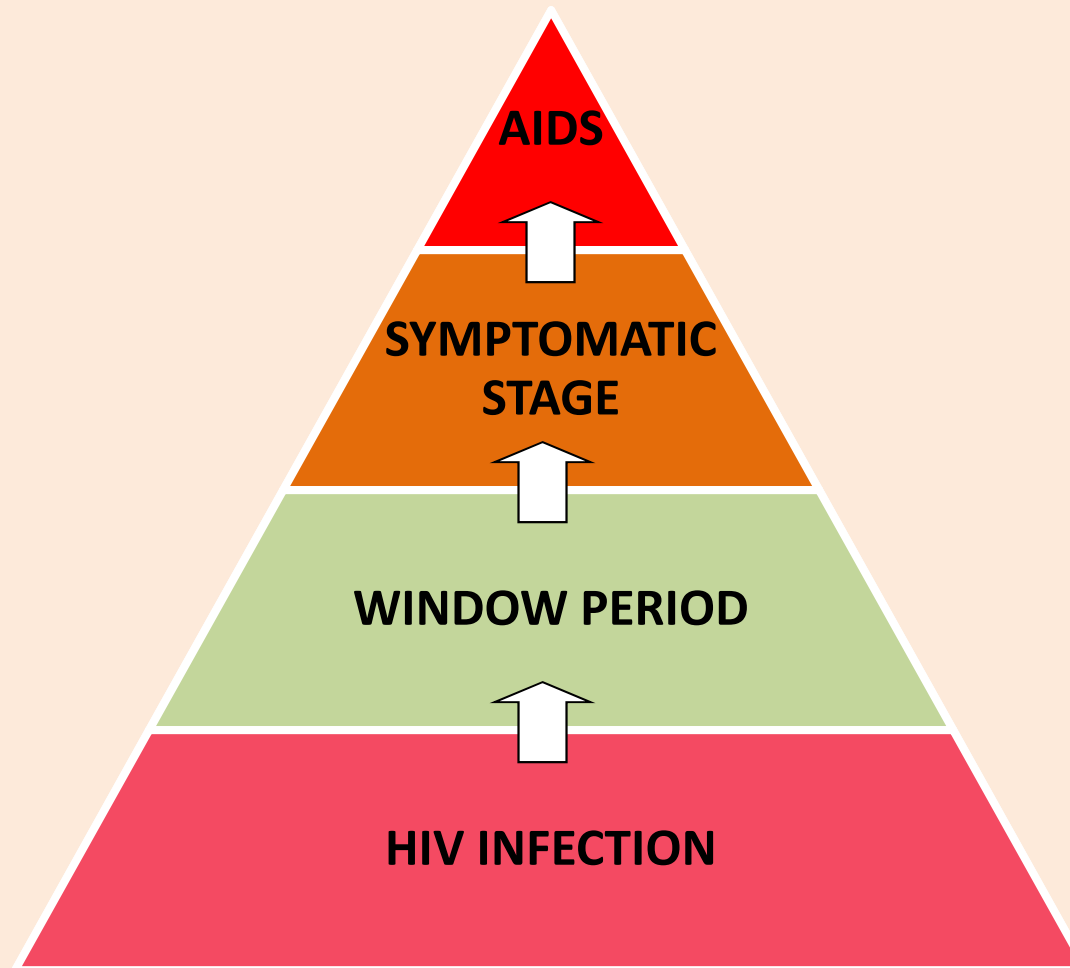
Infections that attack the body when it is weak are called opportunistic infections.

Opportunistic infections affect the body when the immune system is weak. Opportunistic infections cause very serious problems when a person's immune system is weakened by HIV/AIDS.





## PROGRESS OF HIV IN BODY



## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF AIDS

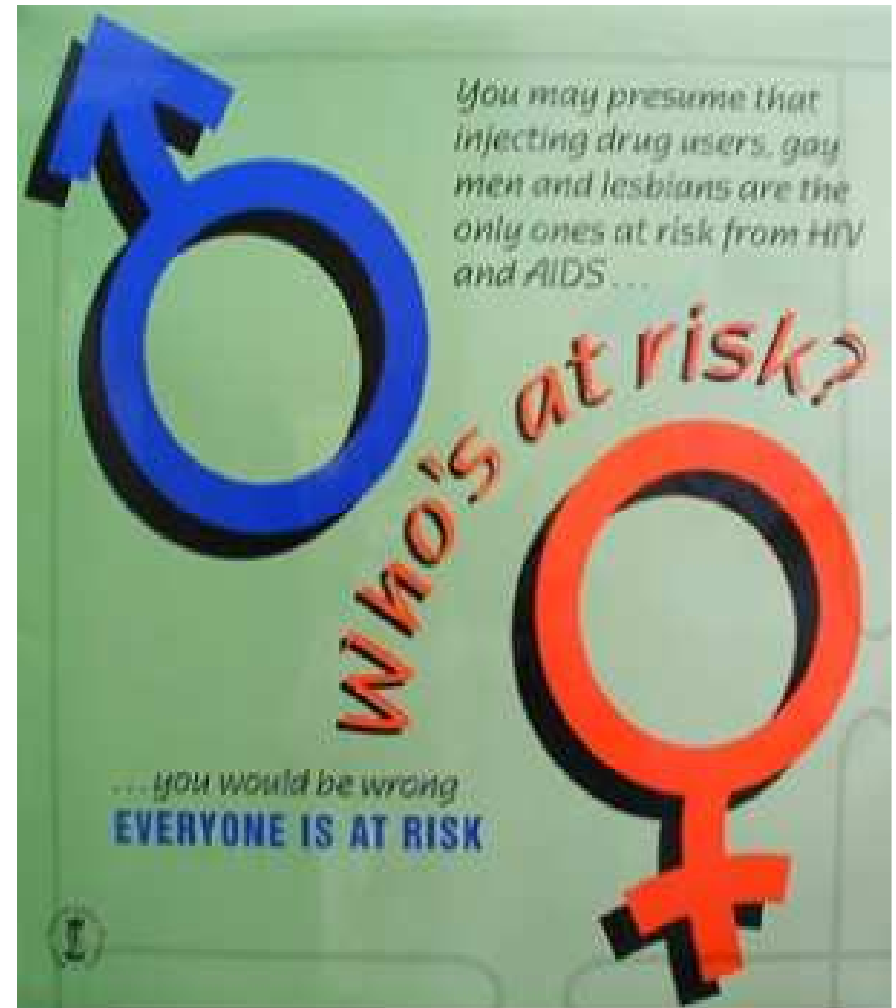
As the person's immune system starts getting weak, signs and symptoms of AIDS develop. These can be:

- **Weight loss greater than 10% of previous body weight.**
- **Fever longer than 1 month.**
- **Diarrhea longer than 1 month.**
- **Persistent severe fatigue.**
- **Repeated infections.**



These symptoms can also occur in people who do not have HIV infection.

However, when several of these occur at the same time in one person and are persistent, they may indicate the development of AIDS and needs to be investigated.



## How HIV/AIDS transmitted from one person to another ?



**Unprotected  
sexual intercourse  
with an infected partner**

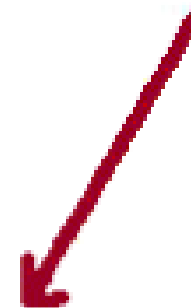
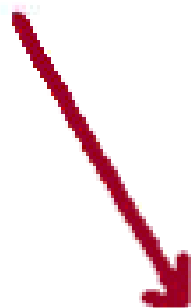


**Vertical  
transmission**  
(from mother  
to child)

- in utero
- during delivery
- breastmilk



**Injection drug use**  
(rare: infected  
blood/blood products)



**HIV INFECTION**

## Tests Used for HIV detection

Enzyme Linked  
Immuno Sorbent  
Assays (ELISA)

SPOT Test / Rapid  
Test

Polymerase Chain  
Reaction (PCR)

Western Blot Test



## Voluntary Counseling Testing Centers ( VCTC )

A person can get tested for HIV at a general hospital or a voluntary counseling testing centers (VCTC ) or any medical center that provides these facilities.



In Kerala these centers are known as “Jyothis” Medical Counseling Centers.

Counseling services (pre and post HIV test counseling to understand the need for testing as well as the test results) and facilities to test HIV are provided in Jyothis centers. Jyothis centers are functioning in Public health Laboratories, Government Medical Colleges, District/Taluk Hospitals, selected PHCs, Private Hospitals, Railway stations etc.



Counselors are bound by confidentiality – that means that whatever is shared should not be shared or discussed with others.



## Is there any treatment or cure for HIV infection or AIDS?

Presently, there is no cure for HIV infection or AIDS. However, medicines are now available that are very effective in controlling HIV in the body.

Antiretroviral treatment(ART) is the treatment for HIV infection that includes using drugs (Antiretroviral drugs- ARVs) that interfere with the way that the HIV virus reproduces in the body. These drugs reduce the number of viruses in the body

The use of the new antiretroviral drugs as well as drugs to prevent opportunistic infections delays the progression of HIV infection to AIDS. Thus, people with HIV infection can lead long and healthy lives.



# Prevention

- Abstinence from sexual intercourse.
- Be faithful to your life partner; avoiding multiple sexual partners.
- Practicing safe sex.
- Treat sexually transmitted infections in its initial stage.
- Use disposable syringes in hospitals and clinics.
- Prevent Mother to Child Transmission.
- Promote HIV testing and counseling.



## HIV cannot be transmitted.....

- Shaking hands
- Drinking water or eating food from the same utensils.
- Socializing or living with people with HIV/AIDS.
- Hugging, touching or casual kissing.
- Caring and looking after people with HIV/AIDS.
- Working in the same place
- Use of the same toilets.
- Sharing telephone or computers.
- Sharing clothes.
- Sneezing and coughing.
- Bites from mosquitoes or other insects



## HIV related stigma and discrimination

What is stigma?

## Stigma is complex



- *Stigma* refers to unfavourable attitudes and beliefs directed toward someone or something
- *Discrimination* is the treatment of an individual or group with partiality or prejudice
- *Stigmatization* reflects an attitude
- *Discrimination* is an act or behavior

Two main types of stigma are:

- External stigma  
[the experience of being treated differently to other people]
- Internal stigma  
[the way a person feels about themselves [e.g. shame, fear of rejection, discrimination]]

## Forms of Stigma

### EXTERNAL stigma

- Avoidance
- Rejection
- Moral judgment
- Stigma by association
- Discrimination (the ACT associated with stigma)
- Abuse
- Victimization
- Abuse of human rights

### INTERNAL stigma

- Self-exclusion from services or opportunities
- Perceptions of self: low self esteem
- Social withdrawal
- Overcompensation
- Fear of disclosure





**‘Many people suffering from AIDS  
and not killed by the disease itself  
are killed by the stigma.’**

*Nelson Mandela, 14<sup>th</sup> International AIDS Conference,*

*Barcelona July 2002*

## The engines driving HIV & Aids stigma



- **HIV infection is a mystery for most people:** it is invisible, incurable and infectious...**blaming** has always been a way of making mysterious and devastating diseases comprehensible' (Nelkin and Gilman 1988)
- **Fear** of infection...
- **People with HIV are seen as the cause of their condition** (a perception strongest in developed countries)
- **Stigma formalises exclusion rules** against groups that are already unpopular, and therefore becomes a form of social control (and eventually a part of 'structural violence') (Douglas, 1996; Farmer 1992)
- Stigma can be **covert, institutionalised, and is often about POWER** (e.g. enforced testing for HIV; screening of 'at risk' groups)

## Challenge

- **HIV-related stigma is increasingly recognized as the single greatest challenge to slowing the spread of HIV/AIDS**
- **HIV/AIDS – a threefold epidemic**
  - HIV
  - AIDS
  - Stigma, discrimination, and denial

## The impact of stigma



- **Social isolation**
- **Limited rights and reduced access to services**
- **HIV/AIDS related stigma fuels new HIV infections**
- **Secondary stigma (stigma by association)**

## **Consequences of AIDS-related stigma and discrimination**

**It causes human suffering due to:**

- ❖ **Loss of employment**
- ❖ **Loss of housing**
- ❖ **Rejection by family**
- ❖ **Ostracized by community**
- ❖ **Denied schooling**
- ❖ **Denied marriage**
- ❖ **Restrictions on movement -> Quarantine**
- ❖ **Physical and verbal abuse and threats**
- ❖ **Interferes with AIDS prevention and treatment services**



**NOT THE PERSON**



# Thank you



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