

DO YOU HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT HIV AND AIDS?

In this brochure, we will help you answer all the questions you have about HIV, AIDS, and other STIs.



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WHAT ARE HIV AND AIDS?

HIV is a virus. When HIV gets inside the body, it destroys the body's defences, making it easier to contract other diseases.

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AIDS is the advanced stage of an HIV infection. It can occur years after the contraction of HIV, when there has been no treatment or it has failed.

HOW IS HIV TRANSMITTED?

→ **SEXUAL CONTACT:**
Anal or vaginal penetration without using condoms or using them improperly.

During **oral sex**, the risk of transmission increases if there are lesions in the oral mucosa of the person who practices it.

Having a **sexually transmitted infection** (STI), even without symptoms, increases the risk of transmitting or contracting HIV during sex.

→ **BLOOD**
When **sharing syringes**, needles or any other object that cuts or pricks and has been in contact with infected blood.

→ **PERINATAL TRANSMISSION**
From mother to her baby during **pregnancy, delivery or breastfeeding** if the mother is not taking antiretroviral treatment.



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HIV IS NOT TRANSMITTED BY

- Kissing, caressing, shaking hands, touching or masturbating your partner.
- Tears, sweat, saliva, cough or sneezes.
- Living together or working with people with HIV.
- Sharing common items such as clothes and food; or common spaces, such as showers, toilets, swimming pools, sports and leisure centres or residences
- Bites or stings from animals and mosquitoes or other insects.
- Giving or receiving blood in countries where screening is adequate.

U=U UNDETECTABLE=UNTRANSMITTABLE

People with HIV who are on antiretroviral treatment and have an undetectable viral load in blood

DO NOT TRANSMIT HIV during sex.



HOW CAN HIV BE PREVENTED?

DURING INJECTION DRUG USE:

- Not reusing or sharing syringes, water or drug preparation equipment.
- Using new needles and syringes obtained from a reliable source every time.

DURING SEXUAL CONTACT:

- Using external or internal condoms (also known as male or female condoms) during sex. If used the right way and if it remains unbroken, condoms are proven tools to prevent the transmission of HIV and most sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- Avoiding ejaculation in the mouth.
- Using water-soluble lubricants during penetration because they reduce the risk of condom tear and facilitate penetration. Oil-based lubricants or creams should never be used.

PREVENTING MOTHER-TO-CHILD TRANSMISSION:

- Thanks to antiretroviral treatment, a mother with HIV who is on treatment and has an undetectable viral load will not transmit the virus to her baby, either during pregnancy or delivery.

PrEP and **PEP** do not replace the regular use of condoms or other prevention methods, as they do not prevent other STIs.

LA PREP (PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS)

A method of **HIV prevention** for people at a high risk of contracting HIV. PrEP is a tablet medication to be taken orally every day. When taken as prescribed, it is highly effective.

LA PEP (POST-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS)

Medications taken after a possible exposure to HIV to prevent infection. To be used only in **emergency situations** and taken within 72 hours of possible exposure.



NO MORE DOUBTS ABOUT VIH

HEALTH PROMOTION AND PREVENTION OF HIV AND OTHER STIs WITH MIGRANT PEOPLE



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HOW CAN I KNOW IF I HAVE HIV?

The only way to know your HIV status is to **GET TESTED FOR HIV**.

It can take up to **3 months** from the time the infection occurs until the antibodies detected in the test are generated. It is vital to know when you had the last risk practice to know if the result is reliable or if it is convenient to repeat it.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS **STIs**

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are infections caused by bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites that, in most cases, are transmitted during sexual contact, especially during vaginal and anal penetration and oral sex (contact of the mouth with the penis, vulva or anus).

STIs are closely related to HIV infection, not only because they share a common means of transmission, but also because they increase the risk of transmitting or acquiring HIV.

Some may be visible, producing symptoms, such as ulcers, sores (open wounds), secretions or pus, warts or condylomas. Others may have no symptoms, so they may seem to disappear in the absence of treatment; however, this does not mean that the infection has been cured. Most STIs are easily cured and prevented, but if not properly treated, they can have major consequences.

With the above in mind, it is important to be **tested for STIs** in the network of authorised health centres and community centres.

GET TESTED!

Check CESIDA's network of associations that perform rapid HIV tests and **LEAVE NO DOUBT**

SAFE. FREE. CONFIDENTIAL

WHERE CAN I GET TESTED FOR HIV?

HIV testing should always be voluntary and confidential and can be performed **free** of charge in health centres of the public healthcare system and in NGOs.

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It can also be done in private clinical analysis laboratories and pharmacies.

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Some STIs centres, NGOs and pharmacies do not ask for a health card.

Most frequent **STIs**:

- Human papillomavirus – HPV
- Chlamydia
- Gonorrhoea
- Syphilis
- Genital herpes
- Hepatitis A, B and C



Knowing if you have HIV will allow you to benefit as soon as possible from medical follow-up and access to effective treatment that will prevent complications in your health and improve your quality of life. You will also be able to protect yourself from reinfection and avoid transmitting HIV to others.

WHEN SHOULD I GET TESTED FOR HIV?

- ➔ If you have had a risky practice, do not wait. Go to your healthcare reference centre or another centre where you can get tested for HIV and other STIs. They will evaluate your case, test you and give you advice on how to proceed to receive medical care.
- ➔ You have never been tested before and have had sex without using a condom.

- ➔ You have had any STI, tuberculosis, or viral hepatitis.
- ➔ You have a stable partner, and you want to stop using condoms.
- ➔ You think you are pregnant or plan to get pregnant.
- ➔ You have shared drug injection equipment (e.g., syringes, needles, spoons or filters) or have used unsterilized equipment for the skin or the mucous membrane (e.g., earrings, piercings and tattoos).



SYMPTOMS INDICATIVE OF AN **STIs**:

- 🕒 Sores, welts, warts or blisters near the genitals, anus or mouth.
- 🕒 Itching or stinging around the genitals.
- 🕒 Burning sensation when urinating or defecating.
- 🕒 Swollen nodes in the form of a lump that may or may not be painful in the groin.
- 🕒 In women, thick or foul-smelling vaginal discharge, stinging or pain with urination or sexual intercourse.
- 🕒 In men, purulent (pus-like) discharge from the urethra, pain or stinging.