

# STD Activity Cards

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# Sexually Transmitted Diseases

1.What are **SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES?** (STDs)

2.Name some STDs.

3.How are STDs transmitted? (3 ways)

4.Can STDs be treated?

5.Which STDs do not have a cure?

6.Signs and symptoms of STDs.

7.Where would someone go for testing and/or treatment?

8.How can STDs be prevented?

# The Story of HIV and AIDS

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a **communicable disease** caused by a virus called HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus). HIV, the AIDS virus, is found in greatest amounts (and can be spread) in blood, semen, vaginal fluid, and breast milk. It has been found in other body fluids like saliva and sweat but it can not be spread from these fluids because there is not very much virus in these fluids. HIV has to get inside someone's body before infection can happen. This can happen in three ways. Most people with HIV got the virus during **unprotected sexual intercourse** with an infected person. Both men and women can be infected with HIV although some people mistakenly believe it is a disease that only homosexual men get. The second way HIV is spread is through **sharing or reusing needles** to inject drugs or pierce and tattoo skin. The third way HIV is spread is from a **mother who has the virus** to her baby. Some people contracted HIV from receiving blood transfusions years ago before there was not a method to screen blood. Now the blood supply is tested for HIV and blood is as safe as it can be. There has never been any risk of getting HIV from giving blood.

HIV is not spread by any sort of everyday contact with people. It is not a disease that you "catch" like the flu or common cold.

You **cannot** contract HIV, the AIDS virus, in any of these ways:

- going to school and being friends with a person who has the AIDS virus
- shaking hands, hugging, touching, kissing
- touching doorknobs, toilet seats, telephones, dishes, towels, etc.
- crying, coughing, sneezing
- sharing food or a drink with someone who has the AIDS virus
- mosquito and other insect bites
- dogs, cats, pets
- swimming pools, or gymnasium equipment

When HIV enters inside a person's body, the virus may be absorbed into the bloodstream and it is in the bloodstream where the damage occurs. HIV slowly destroys white blood cells that are important for a person's **immune system**. This body system works to keep us healthy by producing **antibodies** which search and destroy invaders like bacteria and viruses.

Many people who are infected with HIV have flu-like symptoms early (fever, tiredness, aches and pains) and then they may start to feel better. They may not have any signs of sickness again for ten years or longer but if they are involved in high risk activities (unprotected sexual intercourse, sharing needles) **they could spread the virus to others**. Once a person has HIV she or he has it for the rest of their lives.

**Symptoms** of illness such as diarrhea, night sweats, tiredness, weight loss, swollen glands and fevers develop when the person's immune system has been weakened by the virus. Usually the symptoms last for several weeks or months, or they come and go. The symptoms are common to a number of infections, so having these symptoms does not mean you have HIV. The only way to know is to see a **qualified health professional** and have a blood test. HIV acts a little bit differently in every person. That is why some people become sick after only a few years and other people remain healthy for a long time. Whether a person is sick or not, he or she is still able to spread the virus to others.

A person with HIV has developed AIDS when she or he has been diagnosed with certain serious infections or illnesses. There are a number of different diseases and cancers that a person with HIV could develop. They are diseases that people with healthy immune systems don't get, but because the immune system is so damaged, the person with HIV is not able to fight the diseases. Two common ones are a rare type of pneumonia and cancer of the bloodstream.

There is **no cure** for HIV or AIDS and no vaccine to prevent its spread, although there are treatments for some of the diseases that a person with AIDS can get. Once a person has an AIDS-related disease, he or she may recover from it but they are more likely to develop another disease because their immune system becomes weaker each time there is a new infection or disease to fight.

For most people, the time from HIV infection to the development of AIDS is 7-10 years.

It is not known whether or not all people with HIV will develop AIDS. Treatments which slow the virus down in the body and others which boost the immune system may be the reason why. Some people hope that HIV can become a manageable disease that people can live with.

The good news about HIV is that it is preventable. There are decisions you need to make in your personal life to ensure that you do not become infected with HIV. Protect yourself from HIV in the following ways:

- Postponing sexual intercourse is the best choice for you right now. If you are in a relationship, decide how to express your sexual feelings in ways which do not put you or your partner at risk for HIV. Talk to your partner about your choice and set limits on how far you will go. Understand that not all sexual activities are risky. No one has ever contracted HIV from holding hands, hugging, kissing (even wet kissing), touching above the waist, or below the waist with clothes on. Any time you have contact with another person's sexual fluids or blood, there may be a chance of becoming infected.

- If you decide to have sexual intercourse, you need to practice safer sex by using a latex condom every time. Use a water-based lubricant to help prevent the condom from breaking. This will lower your risk, not eliminate it.
- Never share or reuse needles for drugs, tattooing or piercing your skin.
- Understand how alcohol and drugs lower inhibitions and could make you more likely to have unsafe sex.
- Never share personal hygiene items like toothbrushes or razors which could have someone else's blood on them.
- Avoid contact with another person's blood. If you do touch someone's blood wash your hands thoroughly right away.

Adapted from **The Story of AIDS, Educator's Guide to AIDS and other STDs,**  
by Stephen R. Sroka, Lakewood Ohio, 1989.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# The Story of HIV and AIDS Worksheet

1. AIDS is a disease.
2. AIDS is caused by a \_\_\_\_\_. Called \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Your \_\_\_\_\_ makes antibodies to fight viruses.
4. If you are infected with the HIV, do you always have symptoms?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
5. If you have the AIDS virus in your body, you can spread it to others.  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
6. If you get HIV your immune system becomes \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. There is a cure for HIV and AIDS. True \_\_\_ False \_\_\_
8. Symptoms of HIV are found in many other diseases.  
True \_\_\_ False \_\_\_
9. Who can diagnose HIV/AIDS? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Only an adult can get AIDS. True \_\_\_ False \_\_\_
- 11–13. Name three ways HIV can be spread:
  - a) \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) \_\_\_\_\_
14. You cannot get HIV by donating blood.  
True \_\_\_ False \_\_\_
15. You cannot get the HIV from casual contact such as going to school with someone with HIV.  
True \_\_\_ False \_\_\_
- 16–17. You can prevent infection with HIV in these ways:
  - a) \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) \_\_\_\_\_

