



## Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

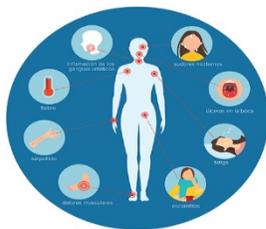
HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is an infection that slowly weakens the body's defense system. The virus attacks CD4 white blood cells (infection fighters). If this decreases below 200 cells, AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) develops. Over time, it becomes difficult to fight the infection and can cause certain types of cancer and heart disease.

### What are the Risk Factors for HIV?

- Having oral, vaginal, and anal sexual contact without using a condom.
- Contact with blood and certain body fluids (semen, vaginal discharge, and breast milk) infected with the virus.
- Sharing needles for drug injection use.
- An infected mother can pass the virus to her baby before, during birth, or through breastfeeding.

### What are the signs and symptoms of HIV?

- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Rash
- Weight loss
- Mouth ulcers
- Night sweats
- Joint pain
- Changes in the ability to think and coordinate



### How is HIV diagnosed?

The doctor will ask about your symptoms and lifestyle. In addition, will order blood tests to detect and make sure you are not infected.



There is no cure for HIV. The goal is to prevent the progression of HIV/AIDS. Antiretroviral (virus) and antimicrobial (bacteria) medications may be needed to protect you from infection. These medications must be used in the manner prescribed by the doctor to be effective in treating the condition.

### How to prevent HIV?

- Use a condom every time you have sex.
- Limit the number of sexual partners.
- Avoid alcohol and drug use.
- Using the appropriate medications, during pregnancy it is possible to prevent the transmission of HIV to the baby in the process of gestation, childbirth or through breastfeeding.



### After an HIV diagnosis:

- Tell all your doctors and your sexual partners.
- Use the latex condom correctly, every time you have vaginal, anal, or oral sexual contact.
- Do not expose your body fluids near another person's mouth, eyes, anus, or open skin breaks.
- Do not share items for personal use such as razors, toothbrushes, tweezers, among others.
- Do not share syringes, needles, or drug preparation equipment.

## Social stigma and Discrimination

Even with all the advances, research, and worldwide efforts to educate about the condition, people diagnosed with HIV or AIDS may still experience stigma and discrimination. This refers to prejudices, attitudes, and negative behaviors of others once they know the person's diagnosis. Going through situations of stigma or discrimination affects the emotional well-being and mental health of the person who experiences it.

### How to improve the quality of life with HIV?

- Use medications as prescribed.
- Keep your medical appointments.
- Eat iron and protein to prevent anemia; and calcium to prevent loss of bone density.
- Avoid eating unpasteurized foods, raw (or undercooked) meats and eggs, or any other foods that can cause food poisoning.
- Do physical activity according to the duration and frequency prescribed by your doctor.
- Do not smoke and avoid the use of alcohol.
- Seek emotional support from a mental health professional.
- Talk to your family, partner, or close friends about your situation.



## Social and Emotional Aspect

For recommendations, tools, and resources on how you and your family can manage emotional and physical concerns that may arise during and after your medical treatment, please visit your primary care physician or contact the following phone lines:

### Medical Advice Line

1-844-347-7801

TTY/TDD: 1-844-347-7804

### Customer Service Department

1-844-347-7800

TTY/TDD: 1-844-347-7805

### APS Healthcare

787-641-9133

### References:

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