

TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

Antiretroviral Therapy

The use of medications to treat HIV is called Antiretroviral Therapy (ART). ART decreases the amount of HIV in the body. ART also stops HIV from multiplying. Though ART does not cure HIV, it can help people living with HIV continue to lead healthy lives, and also reduce the likelihood of transmitting HIV. This is called having an undetectable viral load, or U=U (undetectable=untransmittable).

Condom Use

HIV is spread through contact with blood or bodily fluids, so the way in which the spread of HIV can be prevented is by limiting contact with these fluids. Condom use during vaginal or anal sex is a very effective way of preventing HIV.

PrEP

There is also a daily pill called PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) that can prevent HIV by 92% in women. If you are HIV-positive, treatment can lower your viral load, to a point where the virus is undetectable and therefore untransmittable. If your partner is HIV negative, PrEP can help in decreasing the chances of your partner acquiring HIV. Also, there is a series of pills called PEP which can be taken if you believe you have come in contact with the HIV virus.

Regular Testing

Getting tested for other STI's regularly is also an important tool in preventing the spread of HIV, as HIV is more transmittable when in the company of other STI's.

Payment Assistance

Since the passage of the Affordable Care Act, most job-based and private insurance will pay for HIV treatment and prevention methods.

Taking Control

Everyone has the right to make an informative empowered choice about their health, including sexual health. Furthermore, if you fear discrimination because of your status, you can call us at 213-353-3610.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

General Information

www.blackaids.org
www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/stds-hiv-safer-sex/hiv-aids
www.hiveonline.org
www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/index.html
www.cdc.gov/hiv/group/raciaethnic/africanamericans/index.html
www.pwn-usa.org
www.thewellproject.org

General Information on PrEP

www.blackaids.org/news-and-events/black-women-prep
www.letstalkaboutprep.com
www.hiveonline.org/prep4women
www.projectinform.org/pdf/prep_women.pdf

Payment Assistance Programs

www.gileadadvancingaccess.com
www.copays.org/diseases/hiv-aids-and-prevention
www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/staying-in-hiv-care/hiv-treatment/paying-for-hiv-care-and-treatment
<https://hab.hrsa.gov/get-care/state-hiv-aids-hotlines>

Your Rights and HIV

www.pwn-usa.org/issues/know-your-rights-guide/
www.hivlawandpolicy.org/initiatives/positive-justice-project
www.hivlawandpolicy.org/resources/guidance-people-living-hiv-who-are-risk-or-are-facing-criminal-prosecution-hiv
www.thewellproject.org/hiv-information/hiv-criminalization-and-women



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BLACK AIDS INSTITUTE

BLACK WOMEN AND HIV



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What is HIV?

HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus, an infection that makes it difficult for the body to fight other infections. Without treatment, HIV can advance to AIDS. AIDS is Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome, and means that your body's immune system has been weakened to the point that you may get severe illnesses, called opportunistic infections.

HIV and Black Women

Of HIV diagnoses in 2015, 25% were among women. With 59% of HIV diagnoses in women occurring in Black women, Black women are affected more than any other group. This is not due to biology or behavior; the big difference in the number of diagnoses of Black women and other groups is because of varying relationships to things that can affect health, like housing, education, food security, and health care access. Racism, transphobia, misogyny, and homophobia can impact how Black women access HIV education, prevention, and treatment. It's important to know about all the options you have around your health.

Trans women face particular challenges: the rates of trans women living with HIV are 49x higher than the general adult population. Access to culturally competent education and healthcare providers is crucial.

A 2013 U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) study reports that 2% of transgender women are



living with an HIV diagnosis. Many transgender women face extreme inequities due to stigma, discrimination, social rejection, and exclusion. These factors have a large impact in the relationship between transgender women and education, healthcare access, employment, and housing.

How is HIV Transmitted?

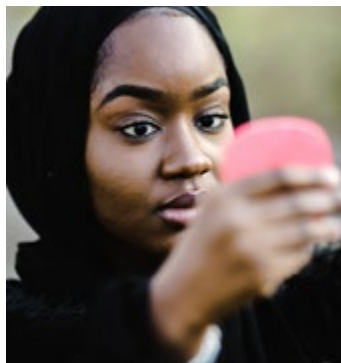
HIV is spread through contact with certain body fluids from a person with HIV. These body fluids include:

- Blood
- Semen (cum)
- Pre-ejaculatory fluid
- Vaginal Fluids
- Rectal Fluids
- Breast Milk

What activities do NOT transmit HIV?

It is known that the only way to spread HIV is through contact with the aforementioned fluids, therefore the following activities have no likelihood of transmitting HIV:

- Masturbating
- Kissing
- Touching your partner's genitals
- Rubbing bodies together
- Having oral sex with a condom, or dental dam
- Sneezing
- Sharing utensils
- Sharing toilet seats



Will I show symptoms if I become HIV-positive?

HIV symptoms can show up differently in different people, but sometimes people have flu-like symptoms such as rash, fever, and chills. Some people do not exhibit any

symptoms at all. You cannot rely on symptoms to know whether or not you have HIV. The only way to know for sure if you are HIV-positive is to get tested.

Where can I get an HIV test? What should I expect?

You can get an HIV test from your primary care provider if you have one, or a reproductive healthcare provider. There are also many organizations that can give you a free HIV test, regardless of your insurance status. During an HIV test, you will probably get a small finger prick, or a blood draw. A rapid test will allow you to receive your results within a few minutes, while a full lab (like an STI panel) will allow you to get results in a few days.

Your HIV counselor may ask you questions about your sexual behavior. This is so they can best help you get all the information you need as well as resources like condoms.

How does HIV relate to my reproductive health?

BIRTH CONTROL: Some HIV medications reduce the effectiveness of different types of hormonal birth control methods, which may include patches, rings, birth control pills, or implants. Women taking HIV medicine may need to use different or additional forms of birth control.

PREGNANCY:

HIV can be passed from mother-to-child during pregnancy, labor, and delivery. To prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV, Antiretroviral



Therapy can be used. If a woman is receiving care, chances of transmission are very low or close to zero. Due to changes in your body during pregnancy, HIV medicine effectiveness may change. For this reason, medicine dosages may change.

BREASTFEEDING: Breastmilk contains the HIV virus, which can be passed along to a breastfeeding baby. If you are okayed to breastfeed by a doctor, you will be given a daily HIV treatment for you and your baby. Switching between breastfeeding and formula will increase a baby's chance of getting HIV. Therefore, sticking to only breastfeeding will reduce the chances of the baby acquiring HIV. Babies of breastfeeding mothers will also have to be tested at birth, at ages four to six weeks, six months, and after they stop being breastfed to make sure that their HIV status has not changed.