

HIV/AIDS 101 - FACTS

HIV can be found in body fluids, including”

- Blood
- Semen
- Pre-ejaculatory fluid
- Vaginal fluids
- Breast milk

(Some body fluids sometimes handled by healthcare workers - fluids surrounding the brain and spinal cord, bone joints, and around an unborn baby)

HIV is passed from one person to another by:

- Having sex (vaginal, anal, or oral) with a person who has HIV
- Sharing needles with a drug user who has HIV
- During pregnancy, birth, or breast-feeding if a mother has HIV
- Getting a blood transfusion from a person with HIV

Abstaining from (not having) sex is the most effective way to prevent HIV transmission. There are several ways to protect yourself or to prevent transmitting HIV during vaginal, oral, or anal sex if you choose to have sex:

- Get tested for HIV and know the HIV status of yourself and your partner
- Be faithful to your sexual partner
- Use condoms or other latex barriers during vaginal, oral, and anal sex, and never reuse condoms or latex barriers

HIV cannot be transmitted by casual contact. Here are the facts:

- You cannot get HIV from shaking hands or hugging a person with HIV/AIDS
- You cannot get HIV from using public telephones, drinking fountains, restrooms, swimming pool, Jacuzzi, or hot tub
- You cannot get HIV from sharing a drink
- You cannot get HIV from being coughed or sneezed on by a person with HIV/AIDS
- You cannot get HIV from giving blood
- You cannot get HIV from a mosquito bite

Transmission of HIV while getting a tattoo or through a body piercing is possible, but it can be prevented through:

- Single-use instruments intended to penetrate the skin being used only once, then disposed of
- Reusable instruments or devices that penetrate the skin and/or contact a client's blood should be thoroughly cleaned and sterilized between clients according to medical guidelines