

HIV/AIDS

the facts



HIV is short for 'human immunodeficiency virus.' It is a virus that attacks your body's immune system, making it easier for you to get sick, catch colds, flus and other diseases.

Even if someone with HIV feels healthy they can spread the virus to other people.

AIDS is short for 'acquired immunodeficiency syndrome' and is caused by HIV. It usually takes about ten years for someone with HIV to develop AIDS, but it can be delayed with appropriate treatment.

Since HIV makes you more likely to be sick, AIDS is when you develop a chronic infection that your body cannot fight.

There is NO CURE and no vaccine for HIV or AIDS but it can be prevented!

What behaviours are linked with HIV risk?

HIV can be passed by blood, semen (including pre-cum), rectal fluid, vaginal fluid and breast milk.

Risky behaviours include:

Being sexually active

- Not using a condom, dental dam etc...
- Having more than one sexual partner

Substance use

- Injection drugs (needles, syringes, cookers, water, alcohol swabs, etc...)
- Sharing other drug paraphernalia (pipes, bills, straws, etc...)

Not getting tested

- Feeling like it can't happen to you
- Not wanting to know...
- > You can harm your partner or your baby
- > HIV can be spread from a mother to her baby during pregnancy, labour, delivery and breastfeeding

Aboriginal women are almost 3 times more likely than non-Aboriginal women (23.1% vs. 8.2%) to test positive for HIV



Tips on Protecting Yourself (Identified by NWAC youth)

Here are some things both guys and girls can do:

Have a Party Plan

Talk to your friends before going out

- Define your limits and talk about what you plans are for the night
- Identify potential scenarios before going out and make a plan
 - > What are the options if things don't go the way you expected?
 - > Make sure everyone has a safe walk/ride home
 - > Keep an eye on your drinks, watch for signs of date rape
- Keep an eye out for your friends at the party
- Know your limits and stay aware
 - > If you're going to party – be safe, stay aware of what's going on around you and try to stay in control
- Be prepared and ALWAYS carry a condom (ladies too)

Smart Sex and Drug Behaviours

- Always use a condom for vaginal or anal sex and a dental dam for oral sex
 - > You can get free condoms from youth centres, hospitals, nursing stations, public health centres etc...
 - > Make a dental dam from a condom
- Clean your sex toys, and use condoms on them, especially if you plan to share them!
- Use your own drug equipment every time you use – don't share
- Don't be shy- share the facts with your friends, talk about HIV, and safe behaviours
 - > Encourage your peers to talk sexual behaviours, healthy relationships and drug use
 - > Advocate for HIV education and prevention in your community
 - > Talk to other youth on these issues from early age

Wrap it
if you
Tap it



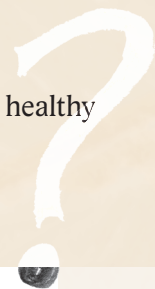
In 2008, out of everyone in Canada, Aboriginal people...

- > Made up 28.4% of HIV positive cases
- > Had the highest amount (12.5%) of new infections of HIV and the development of AIDS
- > Were younger at the age of HIV diagnosis



Relationships - you are in control of your sexual health

- Talk to your partner(s), start the conversation about HIV
 - > Having an open conversation about HIV speaks to the strength, maturity and openness of your relationship- it shows that you care about each others' health
- Get tested regularly and encourage your partner(s) to do the same
 - > It shows that you care about your own and your partners' health
- Be clear about what kind of relationship you want
 - > Ask yourself, what does a healthy relationship mean to me?



If You are Wondering... Could I be HIV Positive?

You are better off knowing if you have HIV. The sooner you know if you are HIV positive, the sooner you can get treatment.

With treatment, HIV can be managed and complications avoided. What to do...

Get a test, it's FREE



- **Where:** Doctors office, hospital, public health unit, nursing station, health centre...
- **What is involved:** A simple blood test will tell if you have HIV.
- **How long:** Don't wait – talk to your health care provider as soon as possible. Different tests have different requirements. After the blood test is complete it takes about two weeks to get the results.
- **Who has to know:** If you are HIV positive, the information may (depending on province) be recorded on your health record, only the testing health care professional, you, and whoever you choose to tell will know about it.

If you are HIV positive, you are legally obligated to tell your sexual partner(s) about the risk. There are counsellors, Elders and healthcare providers available to help you make a sharing plan and support you to act on it.

(taken from www.womenshealth.org)

Conversations about Sex

If your partner says:	You say:
"Trust me...I don't have any diseases."	"It's not about trust. Some people have STIs and don't even know it because they have no symptoms. Using a condom will protect both of us."
"Sex doesn't feel as good with a condom."	"Let's try another brand or style."
"Stopping to put on a dental dam spoils the mood."	"I can't enjoy sex if it's not safe."
"Let's just do it this one time without a condom."	"It only takes one time to get pregnant or get an STI."
"I don't have a condom with me."	"That's okay. I do!"

Overcoming Barriers

to Getting Tested in a Small Community

Some small communities lack...	Possible Solutions
A hospital or health centre in your area	Find out in advance where the closest center/hospital or HIV testing facility is
Transportation to the nearest hospital or health service	Think about ways to get to the closest health service: bus, taxi, car, medical transport
Confidentially, you may know the professional who tests you	Ask a person you trust to accompany you and make sure to ask about confidentiality policies
Culturally sensitive health services and language barriers	Know who your Aboriginal liaison is, or identify a person you trust and contact them for assistance

What can I do if I am HIV Positive?

- Remember that HIV/AIDS is not curable but it is treatable
- Consult professionals, service providers and talk to Elders to see how traditional teachings may help you on your journey
- Learn about treatment options
 - > The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN) has information on your options (www.caan.ca)
- Reach out to people you trust
- Learn about resources available in your community including those that offer a traditional approach



Websites:

Contact your local AIDS services:
<http://www.cdnaids.ca/office/membersnew.nsf/Memberlistwebbyregion!openview&language=English>

National Aboriginal Health Organization 'Sexual Health Part 1: Sexually Transmitted Diseases'
http://www.naho.ca/documents/fnc/english/2011_Sexual_Health_STIs.pdf

The Interagency Coalition on AIDS and Development (ICAD) and the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN);
'Behind the Pandemic in Aboriginal Communities: An Aboriginal Resource Kit on HIV and AIDS'
http://www.icad-cisd.com/pdf/Publications/Behind_the_Pandemic_in_Aboriginal_Communities_EN.pdf

The Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE) provides an online toolkit with a variety of Aboriginal programs;
'Programming Connection: Shared experience. Stronger programs'
<http://www.catie.ca/en/pc>

The National Native American AIDS Prevention Centre (NNAPC);
'HIV Prevention Media, Curricula, and Resources for Native Youth'
<http://www.nnaapc.org/programs/native-youth-media/native-youth-media.htm>

'Be Safe: A Cultural Competency Model for American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians Towards the Prevention and Treatment of HIV/AIDS'
Indian Health Service, National Minority AIDS Education and Training Center
<http://www.ihs.gov/MedicalPrograms/hiv aids/index.cfm?module=training>



Resources for Youth Leaders to Share with their Community

Toll free numbers:

If you have any questions you can always call your provincial HIV hotline.

Alberta: 1-800-772-2437

British Columbia: 811 or 1-604-215-8110

Manitoba: 1-800-782-2437

Newfoundland and Labrador: 1-800-563-1575

New Brunswick: 1-800-561-4009

Northwest Territories: 1-800-661-0844

Nunavut: 1-800-661-0795

Eastern Arctic: 1-800-661-0795

Nova Scotia: 1-800-566-2437

Ontario English: 1-800-668-2437

Ontario Français: 1-800-267-7432

Prince Edward Island: 1-800-314-2437

Quebec: 1-888-855-7432

Hotline for women living with HIV/AIDS in Quebec: 1-866-240-0090

Saskatchewan: 1-800-667-6876

Yukon: 1-800-661-0408, x 8323 After the Test

Native Women's Association of Canada www.nwac.ca

