

BE SAFE!

In Tanzania new HIV cases reduced dramatically in the last few years. The Tanzanian government has worked tirelessly to spread the safe sex message, provide condoms, and to make access to antiretroviral medications easy and provides free testing and follow ups for treatment.

But, it is important that we do not become complacent. Whilst reduced dramatically, there were still 55,000 newly diagnosed cases of HIV last year, and 33,000 people died from Aids related conditions. **Tanzania has 1.4 million people living with HIV.**

It is not yet safe out there, if you are sexually active, you need to pay attention and use the resources available to you to stay safe and reduce your risks.

- Get screened for HIV regularly
- Use condoms for sexual intercourse
- Particularly for women, it is important that you stand up for your right to safe sex, make them use a condom!



Informing Patients Pamphlet series

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HIV

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What is HIV?

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There's currently no cure for HIV; once a person is diagnosed with the virus it stays in their system for life. There are, however, many quality medications available to help people who live with HIV.

HIV belongs to a group of viruses called Retroviruses which work by invading the genetic material of cells within your body. Normally, the body's immune system would fight off such a virus, but HIV stops this from happening by infecting CD4, or T-cells, which are the cells that fight off infection. The virus can live in the body for years without causing obvious damage, though it will continue replicating over this time.

"Between 2010 and 2015, the number of new infections declined by more than 20%"

How do you get HIV?

There are only a handful of activities that put you at risk of contracting or spreading HIV. This is because the virus is not airborne and can only be transmitted through bodily fluids.

These activities are:

- Unprotected sexual intercourse
- sharing needles
- breastfeeding while HIV positive
- Direct blood to blood contact with an HIV positive person.



You are not at risk of contracting HIV if you hug or kiss someone, or share cups, drink bottles or utensils with someone. Body fluids like saliva, sweat or urine do not contain enough of the virus to infect another person.

What happens if I have HIV?

A person infected with HIV is described as "HIV positive", meaning that they receive a "positive" result from a blood test for HIV infection. Many people with HIV continue to look and feel well throughout their lifetime. They may not even be aware that they are living with the virus. However, many HIV positive people do eventually develop different infections and cancers that the body would otherwise normally be able to fight. This can lead to an HIV positive person being diagnosed with AIDS.

What is Aids?

AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome and is an advanced form of HIV. Not everyone that has HIV develops AIDS, largely thanks to advances in medications.

AIDS can develop when HIV weakens a person's immune system so their body is no longer able to protect itself against infections and diseases that a normal immune system would fight off.

As a result, an HIV positive person may show symptoms of different infections and diseases called opportunistic infections. When someone shows symptoms of one or more of these infections, they are considered to have AIDS.

Different people with AIDS may experience different clinical problems, depending on what specific opportunistic infections they develop.

People who are diagnosed with AIDS can recover and regain their health, but they will still be HIV positive.