

How is HIV Transmitted?

HIV is transmitted from one person to another when the following infected fluids enter the bloodstream of another person:

- Blood
- Semen
- Vaginal fluids
- Breast milk
- Pre-Ejaculate fluid (pre cum)

You CAN get HIV from a person who is infected through:

- Sex - having unprotected anal, vaginal or oral sex (without a condom)
- Needles - sharing unclean needles and syringes to inject drugs, steroids or vitamins or sharing needles for body piercing, tattoos or becoming "blood brothers"
- Mother to Child - through pregnancy, birth or breast feeding
- Contaminated Blood Products - Before 1985 donated blood was not tested. Today all donated blood and blood products are tested for HIV.

HIV IS NOT TRANSMITTED THROUGH CASUAL CONTACT

You CAN'T get HIV by:

- Hugging
- Kissing
- Sharing food or drink
- Touching or being around someone who is sneezing or coughing

There is no need for concern about day to day contact in the workplace, at school, from cooks, waiters or from family and friends who have HIV.

There is no evidence that shows HIV can be transmitted by saliva, tears or sweat. Urine and feces do not transmit HIV if there is no blood in them.

Health workers such as doctors, dentists, nurses, emergency medical technicians and others who provide medical care practice "universal precautions", meaning they wear latex gloves and masks to protect themselves and their patients from HIV and other infections. Also, they clean and sterilize instruments or use disposable ones for protection.

REMEMBER: If infected blood, semen, vaginal fluids, pre-ejaculate fluid or breast milk does not get into your bloodstream, there is no risk of HIV infection.

Unprotected oral sex has been proven to be a lower risk for HIV infection compared to unprotected anal or vaginal sex. The person performing oral sex (receptive partner) is at higher risk than the person receiving oral sex (insertive partner) because of potential contact with transmissible fluids.

Now that you have the facts about HIV/AIDS, talk to others and share what you've

learned. HIV disease can be prevented.

If you know someone who has HIV disease or AIDS, the most important thing you can do is be supportive and compassionate. There is effective medical treatment, as well as mental health support and social services that can help people live long and productive lives.