



HIV / AIDS

What is HIV/AIDS?

- Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) causes Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). AIDS is a group of symptoms that occur when a person's immune system cannot fight off infection, in this case caused by HIV.

What are symptoms that could occur?

- There may be no symptoms
- Possible symptoms that may occur include fever, night sweats, sore throat, general tiredness, swollen lymph glands, and a skin rash lasting for a few days to a few weeks may develop
- Early symptoms go away by themselves, but the virus stays in the body
- Late stage is called acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS)
- Children may exhibit different early HIV symptoms:
 - Failure to grow and gain weight, chronic diarrhea without a specific cause, enlarged liver and spleen, swollen lymph glands, chronic thrush (yeast infections), pneumonia, and other bacterial, viral, fungal, and parasitic infections
 - Children may be infected with HIV for many years before developing symptoms

How is it spread?

- HIV is not easily transmitted
- Most common ways that HIV is spread:
 - Sharing contaminated needles for intravenous drug abuse
 - Sexual intercourse
 - Infected pregnant women to the fetus
- Less common ways that HIV is spread:
 - Exposure to infected blood through a blood transfusion
 - Breastfeeding
 - Occupationally to health care workers (needlesticks)
 - Exposure of open skin or mucous membranes to HIV contaminated body fluids

How is it diagnosed?

- Primary care provider evaluation and laboratory testing
- Treated with anti-viral medication
- Symptoms of different diseases treated with appropriate medication as necessary

How can it be prevented?

- Abstain or stop having sexual intercourse until ready to enter a mutually monogamous relationship
- Do not use or inject or stop using and injecting illicit drugs
- When choosing to have sexual intercourse, use a condom correctly and every time you have intercourse
- Seek HIV counseling and testing if you engage in unprotected sexual intercourse or are involved in using or injecting illicit drugs

Should the sick child be isolated?

- No

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When can the child return to day care or school?

- There is no need to exclude the child from attending school

Should schools do special cleaning?

- Special cleaning is not necessary. Routine cleaning with EPA approved products is recommended.

If I have any other questions, whom can I contact?

- Call the Genesee County Health Department at 257-3612

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information, call your health care provider.

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