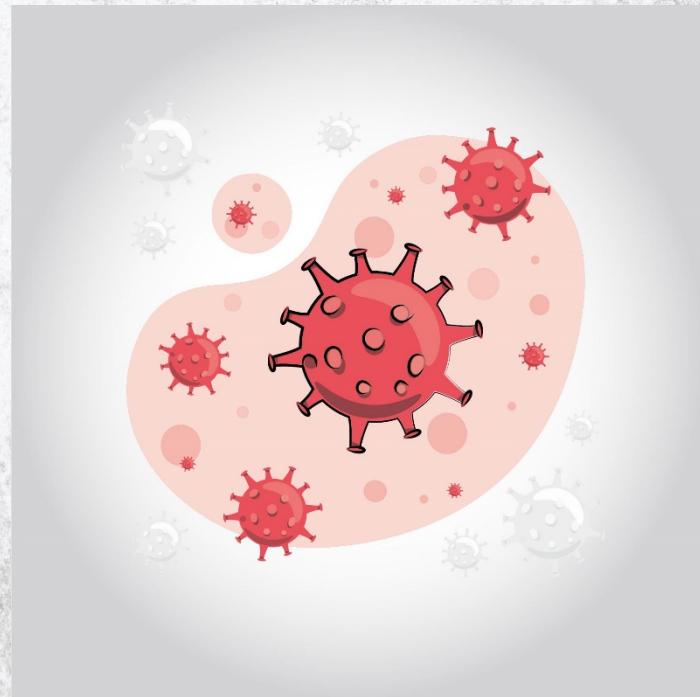


Immunodeficiency virus (HIV)/ AIDS



HIV is a sexually transmitted infection. It can also be spread through contact with infected blood or from mother to child during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding. Without medication, it can take years for HIV to weaken your immune system.

What are the symptoms?

- Fever
- Headache
- Muscle and joint pain

Sore throat and painful mouth ulcers

Swollen lymph nodes, especially in the neck area

- Diarrhea

- Weight loss

- Cough

- Night sweats

How does HIV spread?

HIV can be spread in different ways:

- Through unprotected sex with a person infected with HIV. This is the most common way to spread it.

By sharing drug needles

- Through contact with the blood of a person infected with HIV
- From mother to child during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding

Evolution to AIDS

When AIDS occurs, your immune system is severely damaged. You'll be more likely to get opportunistic infections or opportunistic cancers — diseases that don't usually cause disease in a person with a healthy immune system.

Is there a cure?



Currently, there is no cure for HIV/AIDS. Once you have an infection, your body cannot get rid of it. However, there are many medications that can control HIV and prevent complications. These medicines are called antiviral therapy. Everyone with HIV should start antiretroviral therapy, regardless of the stage of infection or complications.

Antiviral treatment is usually a combination of three or more drugs from several different classes of drugs. This approach has the best chance of lowering the amount of HIV in the blood. There are many antiviral treatment options that combine three HIV medications into one pill that is taken once daily.

Protection

Infection can be prevented by:

- Good understanding and knowledge of the ways of transmission of infection and not to practice behaviors that may expose you to infection.
- Refrain from using needles or skin piercing tools with another person.
- Use condoms in a correct manner to prevent transmission of the virus through sexual relations.

