

The FACTS about HIV and AIDS

WHAT IS HIV?

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), the virus that causes AIDS, weakens a person's ability to fight disease. HIV attacks the body's defense system so that it is unable to fight other illnesses. People with HIV can develop diseases or infections that usually are not harmful for people with healthy immune systems.

WHAT IS AIDS?

AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) is a condition that results from HIV infection. The condition is caused by the weakening of the immune system as a result of HIV. By the time people with HIV develop AIDS, their immune systems have become damaged and may no longer be able to fight off other infections.

HOW IS HIV SPREAD?

- By unprotected sex (vaginal, oral, or anal) with an HIV-infected person
- By sharing needles with an HIV infected person to inject drugs, medicine, steroids, or vitamins, or for body piercing or tattoos
- An HIV infected mother to her baby
- The body fluids that transmit HIV are: blood, semen, vaginal fluids, breast milk

HIV KNOWS NO BOUNDARIES

HIV can infect men, women, and children of any age, race, or ethnicity. With the development of new medications and increased knowledge, more HIV-infected individuals live longer and fuller lives.

STATS

- South Carolina ranks in the top 10 in the nation for HIV and AIDS
- One person is infected with HIV every 9.5 minutes in the United States
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that more than 18% of people living with HIV/AIDS in the United States are unaware of their HIV status