

Prevention

To prevent sexually transmitted diseases, remember ABC.



Abstinence

Abstain from sex by choosing to say no



Be faithful

Be faithful to your current sex partner

Condoms

Use a condom every time you are having sex.



Talk to people

Help stop the spread of HIV and talk to others on how to protect themselves, their family and community.

Remind sexually active people of the importance of safe sex and where they can access free condoms.

Free condoms are available from your village health worker or the box at your BHU, Hospital, Health Information & Service Centers, or selected hotels, pool halls or nightclubs.

Condoms can also be purchased from medicine or pan shops.



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HIV/AIDS



HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is an infection that affects the body's natural ability to fight off infections. A person with HIV will be infected for the rest of his/her life. HIV eventually leads to AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome).

There is no cure for HIV, although there are some medicines to help slow the rate of progression to AIDS. This treatment is called anti-retroviral therapy.

If you have been at risk of HIV you need to get tested, as not everyone shows symptoms of infection and you can pass the infection on.

How you can get HIV

HIV can only be transmitted via bodily fluids including blood, semen and vaginal fluids.

That is why it cannot be transmitted by shaking hands, hugging, kissing, insect bites, living in the same house or sitting on the same seat.

Symptoms

Some people have immediate symptoms of HIV including fever, headache, fatigue and rash. Others can feel and look healthy for ten years or more and may not show any symptoms. As the virus attacks the body, a person will develop signs and symptoms of AIDS. These include fatigue, swollen glands, rapid weight loss, night sweats, memory loss and diarrhoea.

There are three ways HIV can be transmitted.

1. Unprotected sex



Unprotected sex (anal, vaginal or oral) with an infected person.

2. Infected blood



Sharing needles or by skin piercing equipment including blades and razors.

3. Mother to child



From an infected woman to her child, during pregnancy, birth or from breastfeeding.

You are most at risk of HIV if:

- 1) You have multiple sex partners
- 2) You don't use condoms
- 3) You or your sex partner has another sexually transmitted infection
- 4) You are a drug user who shares syringes and needles.

Get Tested

HIV medicines are available to prolong the lives of those with HIV and all other STIs can be cured.

If you have had unsafe sex and think you could have HIV or an STI, get tested for your wellbeing and to stop the spread of infection.

It's the only way you know if you have HIV.



HISC Counselling

To get tested ask your village health worker, or visit your district hospital or the Health Information & Service Centre in Thimphu or Phuentsholing.