

# **I CAN TAKE CONTROL OF MY HEALTH**



Easy-to-read

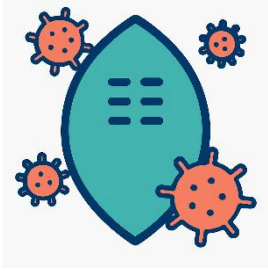




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## 1. What is HIV?

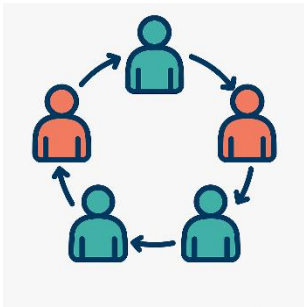
HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus.

HIV is a virus that gets into your body.

HIV attacks your body's soldiers (the immune system).

When your body has weak soldiers, you get sick easily.

Once HIV enters your body, it does not go away.

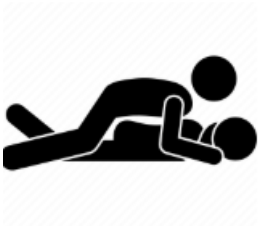


## 2. How is HIV spread?

HIV spreads through body fluids that have HIV

The body fluids can be

- Blood
- Fluids from having sex
- Breast milk



You can get HIV in these ways:

Having sex without a condom with someone who has HIV



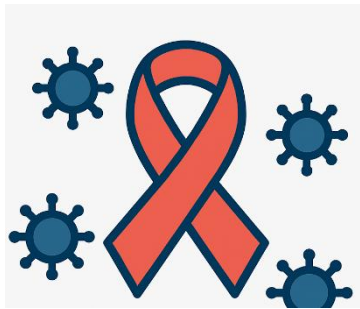
Sharing needles or syringes

A blood transfusion means getting new blood into your body.



You can get HIV from blood transfusions

From a mother to a baby during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding



### **3. What is AIDS?**

AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

AIDS is the last stage of an HIV infection.

It is a group of serious illnesses that happen when your soldiers are too weak.

If you do not take medicine for HIV, it can turn into AIDS.



### **4. How do I know if I have HIV?**

You can only know by doing an HIV test.



You must talk to a trained person (a counsellor) before and after the test.

This is called counselling.



### **5. How is HIV Treated?**

HIV cannot be cured.

But it can be controlled.

HIV stops growing if you take your medicine every day.

You must take HIV medicine for the rest of your life.



## 6. What are the benefits of starting HIV medicine today?



HIV medicine helps your body stay strong.  
It protects your body from getting very sick.  
You can live a longer and healthier life.  
You can work, go to school, and do everyday things.

## 7. Who can get HIV medicine?



Everyone who has HIV can get medicine.  
This medicine is called Antiretroviral Therapy (ART).  
It does not matter what your CD4 count is.  
CD4 cells are the body's soldier cells.

## 8. How can I stay safe?

You can remember this word: **PASOP**  
It is a way to stay safe and help others.



**P** is for Prevent new infections.

**A** is for Avoid re-infection and mother-to-child infection.

**S** is for Stop risky behaviour.

**O** is for Overcome living with HIV and the stigma.

Stigma means people treat you badly because of something about you

**P** is for Protect yourself and others.



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