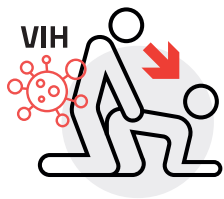


Myths and facts (II)

There are many misconceptions about HIV and AIDS and not everything you hear about them is true. This fact sheet will help you to distinguish myths from facts.



Myth

People with HIV spread the infection every time they have sex.

Fact

The risk of HIV transmission depends on different factors. It is not true that HIV spreads every time a person has unprotected sex.

The risk of transmission depends on several factors. Steps can be taken to reduce or even eliminate the risk of HIV transmission, such as using condoms, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). Remember that if the person with HIV has an undetectable viral load because of treatment, there is no risk of transmission.



Myth

Antiretroviral drugs do more harm than good.

Fact

Without antiretroviral drugs, most people with HIV would become seriously ill, develop AIDS and die.

If taken properly, treatment allows people to live long and healthy lives. Most of the possible side effects disappear after a few weeks and have no long-term consequences. The health of people taking antiretroviral drugs is monitored carefully to check they are well.



Myth

Nutritional supplements and herbs can be just as effective against HIV as antiretroviral drugs.

Fact

Some herbal remedies and supplements may be beneficial to your overall health, but they cannot prevent HIV from infecting new cells and from spreading.

Only antiretroviral drugs have been proven to stop HIV from spreading in the body. In addition, some herbal supplements can affect the way in which some antiretrovirals work. For example, they may reduce the amount of drug reaching the blood and make it less effective against HIV.



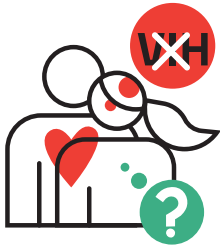
Myth

You cannot be infected with HIV if you are married or in a closed relationship.

Fact

Unfortunately, millions of people who are married or in stable, long-term relationships acquire HIV.

This sometimes happens because one partner was already HIV-positive before the couple met. It also occurs when one of the partners has had unprotected sex outside the relationship.



Myth

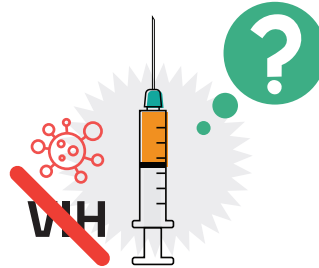
I cannot get HIV because I am heterosexual.

Fact

Some people think that only gay men and people who inject drugs can get HIV. However, HIV is not spread by population group, but depends on the risk behaviours that a person engages in.

HIV can be spread from man to woman and from woman to man when they have unprotected sex and the other person has HIV and a detectable viral load. In fact, on a world scale, most people with HIV are heterosexual.

Myths and facts (II)



Myth

A pharmaceutical company has found a cure for HIV but is keeping it secret, so it does not lose money.

Fact

No pharmaceutical company has been able to develop a treatment to cure HIV.

Many pharmaceutical companies produce antiretroviral treatments and there is a lot of competition among them. If one were to find a cure and could market it, it would make a much bigger profit than its competitors. Research is ongoing.

Some of the content of this fact sheet is based on an original publication by NAM, a UK-based not-for-profit HIV organisation. **This material has been translated with the permission of NAM.**

gt grupo de trabajo sobre tratamientos del VIH
ENTIDAD DECLARADA DE UTILIDAD PÚBLICA
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