

# Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)



HIV is a virus that infects the cells within a person's immune system. It is passed from one person to another through contact with body fluids from a person already infected with HIV. There are an estimated 40 million people infected with HIV worldwide, including over 1 million people in the United States. Almost a quarter of the people in the U.S. that are infected with HIV are unaware of their infection, posing a high risk of further spreading the virus.

HIV affects everyone in the U.S., but the impact has been more severe for some groups. People at highest risk for HIV include men who have sex with other men and injection drug users. It has also become a serious problem among heterosexual African Americans and the Hispanic/Latino population.

In order to stop the spread of HIV, it is important for people to understand the risks, and to know their status.

## Are you at risk for HIV?

- Have you had unprotected sex with multiple partners?
- Have you ever had sex with a man that has had sex with other men?
- Have you been diagnosed with two or more sexually transmitted infections?
- Have any of your sexual partners been HIV positive?
- Have you or your sexual partner ever injected drugs?
- Have you exchanged sex for drugs, money, or something you need?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, you may be at risk for HIV and should be tested. Testing is not available at the DeKalb County Health Department. Please see the [STD referral list](#).

## HIV transmission information

HIV is a communicable infectious disease. Transmission requires the exchange of infectious bodily fluids during some intimate or invasive activity. There are only certain bodily fluids and activities that have been identified as ways to transmit HIV.

### Infectious Bodily Fluids

Blood/ blood products  
Semen  
Vaginal fluids  
Breast milk

### Non-Infectious Bodily Fluids

Saliva  
Tears  
Perspiration  
Urine/ Feces  
Sputum  
Vomit  
Nasal fluids

## Routes of Transmission

**Sexual Intercourse:** anal, vaginal, or oral sex

**Exposure to Blood:** sharing of injection needles, an occupational needle stick or transfer of blood/blood products

**Perinatal:** from mother to child during pregnancy, birth, or while breast feeding

## Activities that do NOT transmit HIV

Casual contact  
Sharing bathroom facilities  
Coughing/sneezing  
Eating/sharing food  
Touching/shaking hands  
Hugging/kissing *Insect bites*  
Donating blood  
Swimming/bathing

For more information about HIV, please call 815-748-2467



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