

## Introduction to

# HIV/AIDS



### Risk Factors:

- **Age**  
Those under 40 years old are more likely to become infected with HIV.
- **Race/Ethnicity**  
Blacks and Hispanics are at a higher risk of HIV infection.
- **Gender**  
Men who have sex with men (MSM) have high risk of becoming infected.
- **Risky Sexual Behavior**
- **Perinatal Infection**
- **Having a Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD)**  
Having an STD increases the risk of HIV infection.
- **Sharing of Needles or Syringes**

### Increases the risk of:

- **Wasting Syndrome**  
Causes the loss of more than 10% of body weight and muscle.
- **Candidiasis (Thrush)**
- **Pneumonia**
- **Tuberculosis (TB)**
- **Invasive Cervical Cancer**
- **Dementia**
- **Hepatitis C**

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is caused by a virus that attacks the human immune system by destroying white blood cells. With the disease, the body is less able to fight off infection.

AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) is the advanced stage of HIV infection. AIDS is often diagnosed when either the white blood cell count falls below a certain level or when a person with HIV develops certain cancers or illnesses.

The HIV virus is found in the blood, semen, pre-seminal fluid, vaginal fluid, and breast milk.

The virus is transmitted through sex (oral, anal, & vaginal) with an infected person, sharing of needles or syringes with an infected person, before or during childbirth, or through breastfeeding.

### Facts

- In 2009, nearly 48,000 people were infected with HIV in the United States.
- Currently, over 1 million Americans are living with HIV.
- Of those diagnosed with HIV in 2009, Blacks accounted for 44% of all cases.

For more information and data, go to  
[www.SDHealthStatistics.com](http://www.SDHealthStatistics.com)

Community Health Statistics Unit:  
619-285-6479

### Prevention

- Practice safe sex.
- Do not share needles or syringes with others.
- Seek prenatal treatment if you are pregnant.
- Seek treatment for STDs.
- Get an HIV test.



### Resources

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

[www.aids.gov](http://www.aids.gov)

National HIV & STD Testing Resources

<http://www.hivtest.org/>



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