



Discussion Guide for

AIDS: THE TEEN GUIDE TO LIVING

OBJECTIVES

- To define the HIV virus and AIDS.
- To detail how HIV is, and is not, transmitted from one person to another.
- To provide six questions students can ask themselves to determine if they are at risk of getting HIV.
- To define safer sex and how to practice it.
- To provide information on HIV testing and how to handle the results.

SYNOPSIS

Scientists today are becoming optimistic that HIV infection will someday be controllable. In the meantime, people of all ages are learning how to avoid risking exposure to HIV, and living responsibly to protect themselves and their loved ones.

AIDS: The Teen Guide to Living covers many issues and concerns regarding the AIDS virus, including what the virus is, how it is transmitted, who is at risk, how infection can be avoided, how one can be tested for the virus and what options are available upon receiving a positive test result. The program also describes ways that the virus is not spread, dispelling common misconceptions.

The spread of the AIDS virus has generated a great deal of fear among the general public, primarily due to lack of reliable information. This program provides young people with the straight-forward information that they need to avoid the risk of HIV infection. Produced by Educational Media Productions.

QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE VIEWING

1. What is AIDS?
2. How is it transmitted?
3. Can anyone "catch" the virus?

QUESTIONS TO ASK AFTER VIEWING

1. What is AIDS? (AIDS stands for Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome, a disease in which the body's immune system breaks down. A person with AIDS can develop a variety of life-threatening illnesses.)

2. What causes AIDS? (It is caused by the human immunodeficiency virus, or HIV.)

3. What questions should you ask yourself to see if you are at risk for AIDS? (Have you shared needles or syringes to inject drugs or steroids? If you are a male, have you had sex with other males? Have you had sex with someone who may be infected with HIV? Have you had a sexually transmitted disease? Did you receive blood transfusions or blood products between 1978 and 1985? Have you had unprotected sex with someone who would answer yes to any of these questions?)

4. How can you get infected? (The two main ways are by having unprotected sex, or by sharing drug needles or syringes with an infected person.)

5. How might HIV enter the body? (HIV can enter the body through sex or through cuts or sores in the skin since it may be in an infected person's blood, semen, or vaginal secretions.)

6. What are the only sure ways to avoid infection through sex? (By not having sex or by having sex only with someone who is not infected and only has sex with you.)

7. Does using latex condoms during sex prevent the spread of AIDS? (They have been shown to help prevent HIV infection. But you have to use condoms correctly every time you have sex-vaginal, anal, or oral. In any case, condoms do not provide perfect protection. See Question #6.)

8. Why is sharing drug needles risky? (HIV from an infected person can remain in a needle or syringe and then be injected directly into the bloodstream of the next person who uses it.)

9. If you are infected, will you know it? (Doubtful. Many infected people have no symptoms.)



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10. What does safer sex mean and how can you practice it? (It means properly using condoms every time you have sex. There is no known risk of infection except in situations where we come in contact with blood, semen, or vaginal fluids. Safer sex also can mean abstaining from intercourse.)

11. How can you tell if you have HIV? (The only way to tell if you have been infected with HIV is by taking an HIV antibody blood test. This test should be done through a testing site, doctor's office, or clinic familiar with the test.)

12. List the ways that you won't get HIV. (You can't "catch" HIV like a cold or flu: it is not spread by coughs or sneezes. You won't get it through everyday contact with infected people at school, work, home, or anywhere else. You won't get it from clothes, phones, toilet seats, forks, cups, or other objects that an infected person has used. You won't get HIV from a mosquito bite, or from bedbugs, lice, flies, or other insects. You won't get it from sweat, saliva, tears, or a simple kiss. Most scientists agree that although transmission of HIV through deep or prolonged kissing may be possible because of potential blood contact, it's unlikely.)

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