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# WORLD AIDS DAY IS DECEMBER 1ST



World AIDS Day is an annual event providing opportunities for talking, learning and caring about HIV and AIDS, and ways in which they affect us all.

Sadly some people still do not take HIV seriously because they think that it only affects certain people. This is leading to more people becoming infected. This short leaflet helps to explain why each of us needs to take HIV seriously.

## WHAT IS HIV?

HIV is a virus. People with HIV can go on to develop AIDS, though this can take up to 10 years or more. During this time HIV can be passed on if precautions are not taken.

## HOW DO PEOPLE GET THE VIRUS?

HIV can only be transmitted when either the semen, vaginal fluids or blood from an infected person gets into someone else's body. The main ways this can happen are through sex without using a condom or sharing someone else's injecting equipment (e.g. needles/syringes).

## WHY DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT IT?

HIV really can affect anyone. Each year more young people start having sex for the first time, and HIV can affect you at any age, whether you're young or old.

Remember, once you know how HIV is passed on, protecting yourself is simple. If you have sex make it Safer Sex and if you take drugs make it Safer Drug Use.

## WHAT IS SAFER SEX?

This means reducing the risk of getting semen, vaginal fluid or blood (including menstrual blood) into your body during sex, for example by using a condom during sex. Remember Safer Sex also helps prevent other sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy.

## WHAT IS SAFER DRUG USE?

An important part is not sharing injecting equipment (e.g. needles/syringes) with someone else. This will stop small amounts of someone else's blood getting into you. If you do inject, get clean equipment from a local syring exchange. Also find out how to clean equipment properly.

Remember Safer Drug Use also helps prevent other infections, such as hepatitis.

*Sharing the Challenge*



You can get more information from the following helplines:

**YOUR LOCAL AIDS HELPLINE:**

**SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE CLINIC:**

**NATIONAL AIDS HELPLINE:**

**0800 567123**

(24 HOURS A DAY)



Bengali/Gujarati  
Hindi/Punjabi/Urdu:  
0800 282445  
(Wednesday 6pm – 10pm)

Cantonese:  
0800 282446  
(Tuesday 6pm – 10pm)

Arabic:  
0800 282447  
(Wednesday 6pm – 10pm)

MINICOM for hearing impaired  
0800 521361  
(Daily 10am – 10pm)

**The Terrence Higgins Trust**



HELPLINE

**071-242 1010**

(DAILY 3pm – 10pm)

LEGAL LINE 071-405 2381  
(WEDNESDAY 7pm – 10pm)



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