

Exploring the facts about HIV/AIDS

Source: *This exercise has been adapted from Murtagh, B. Peer education (book 3). Health Promotion Unit of the National Youth Federation Ireland / The National Youth Health Program: Knowledge is power. HIV / AIDS Education Pack for exploring the issues with young people. Department of Education and Science, Ireland*

Although HIV and hepatitis transmission routes are talked about quite frequently, people still have uncertainties and doubts especially about transmission in everyday life

Objective:

1. Explore the facts about HIV/AIDS and hepatitis

Duration: 45 - 60 minutes

No. of participants: Minimum 6, maximum 20

Material needed: Pens, questionnaires and answer sheets for clarification

Exercise outline:

- Circulate the questionnaire to participants
- Discuss answers on completion

Variations:

- Have three large sheets of paper. One marked AGREE, the second DISAGREE and the third UNSURE.
- Place AGREE and DISAGREE on walls at opposite ends of the room, and UNSURE in the middle.
- Read out a statement. If people agree with it they should go to the AGREE end or stand at whichever card they think best suits their viewpoint.
- Encourage discussion between participants on their suggested answers. Some statements have clear correct answers, while others are deliberately ambiguous to generate discussion and to encourage participants to think about different situations. Clarify the correct information at the end of each section.

STATEMENTS ON HIV/AIDS (1/3)

DO YOU THINK HIV CAN BE FOUND IN ...	Agree	Disagree	Unsure
Air?			
Blood?			
Food?			
Men's semen?			
Women's vaginal fluids?			
Breast milk			
Saliva?			
Sweat?			
Tears?			
Urine?			
Skin contact?			

DO YOU THINK YOU CAN GET HIV FROM ...	Agree	Disagree	Unsure
Oral sex (women with women)?			
Insect or animal bites?			
Getting a tattoo?			
Being sneezed on by someone who is infected with HIV?			
Sharing a toothbrush?			
Mixing blood?			
Sharing needles?			
Wet kisses?			
Sharing a dildo?			
Ear Piercing?			
Mouth to mouth resuscitation?			
Cleaning up someone else's blood?			
Blood transfusion?			
Shaking hands?			

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DO YOU THINK WOULD HELP YOU TO AVOID GETTING HIV...	Agree	Disagree	Unsure
Not sharing a cell with an HIV-positive woman?			
Using the contraceptive pill?			
Stopping oral sex before the man comes?			
Stopping vaginal sex before the man comes?			
Not borrowing a toothbrush?			
Always using condoms during professional sex contacts?			
Not sharing cups and towels with your cell mate?			

ANSWERS SHEET TO EXPLORING THE FACTS 2/3

DO YOU THINK HIV CAN BE FOUND IN ...		
Air?	No	HIV is not an airborne virus. Therefore there is no risk from being in the same room or being near somebody who is infected.
Blood?	Yes	HIV is present in large quantities in the blood of an infected person to allow transmission to occur.
Food?	No	HIV is transmitted only via body fluids. There is no danger from eating food which has been handled by someone who is HIV positive.
Men's semen?	Yes	If the semen from an infected person enters the body of another person, e.g. during unprotected sexual intercourse
Women's vaginal fluids?	Yes	HIV can be found in vaginal fluid and transmission can occur
Breast milk	Yes	The breast milk of an infected woman does contain HIV and it is possible for the mother to infect her baby during breastfeeding
Saliva?	Yes	All the body fluids of an HIV infected person contain the virus in varying quantities. Saliva does not contain enough of the virus to facilitate transmission
Sweat?	Yes	See above
Tears?	Yes	See above
Urine?	Yes	See above
Skin contact?	No	

DO YOU THINK YOU CAN GET HIV FROM ...		
Oral sex (women with women)?	Yes	HIV can be found in vaginal fluid and transmission can occur.
Insect or animal bites?	No	Mosquitoes, for example, cannot infect people with HIV.
Getting a tattoo?	Yes	The risk associated with tattoos relates to the use of "dirty" needles, which might have been used on an HIV-infected person.
Being sneezed on by someone who is infected with HIV?	No	No risk
Sharing a toothbrush?	Yes	Very low risk
Mixing blood?	Yes	Very low risk
Sharing needles?	Yes	Very high risk
Wet kisses?	No	Although theoretically possible it is highly improbable. The amount of virus present in the saliva is usually very small.
Sharing a dildo?	Yes	HIV can be found in vaginal fluid and transmission can occur through sharing a dildo.
Ear Piercing?	Yes	But very low risk through contaminated needles.
Mouth to mouth resuscitation?	Yes	Theoretically possible. If there is blood in the mouth of the person who is dying then there is a slight risk, but no single case of infection is known.
Cleaning up someone else's blood?	Yes	If the blood is infected and the person who is cleaning up has cuts or open wounds on the hands and is not wearing gloves.
Blood transfusion?	Yes	An number of people have been infected this way in the past before testing of blood started
Shaking hands?	No	No risk

ANSWERS SHEET TO EXPLORING THE FACTS 3/3

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DO YOU THINK WOULD HELP YOU TO AVOID GETTING HIV...		
Not sharing a cell with an HIV-positive woman?	No	Infection will only occur through sex, shared needles and syringes, or blood-to-blood contact.
Using the contraceptive pill?	No	The pill offers no protection against HIV or other blood-borne diseases.
Stopping oral sex before the man comes?	No	Often this method is not successfully applied within the dynamic of sexual intercourse.
Stopping vaginal sex before the man comes?	No	See above
Not borrowing a toothbrush?	Yes	Although minimal risk (see above)
Always using condoms during professional sex contacts?	Yes	Condoms are a successful means of preventing infected semen from reaching your blood
Not sharing cups and towels with your cell mate?	No	Infection will only occur through sex, shared needles and syringes, or blood-to-blood contact.