

HIV jista' jidhol fil-ġisem minn ulċeri, qatghat u selhiet fil-ġilda, minn membrani mukuži bhal dawk ta' ġol-warrani u l-vaġina jew minn injezzjonijiet. Hemm diversi modi li permezz tagħhom dan jista' jsir:

Kuntatt sesswali ma' persuni infettati: Sess orali u vaġinali bla kondom ma sieheb/sieħba infettati. Sess orali huwa inqas riskjuż minn sess orali u vaġinali mhux protett imma ir-riskju mhux nul. Ir-riskju li tinfetta ruhek bl-HIV huwa ikbar meta il-persuna tkun qed tagħti sess orali milli meta tirċievi sess orali. Ir-riskju li tinfetta ruhek bl-HIV huwa ikbar meta il-persuna taġhti s-sess orali għandha qatghat jew selhiet fil-halq jew fil-gerżuma jew jekk il-persuna li qed tirċevi is-sess orali tiġekola fil-halq tal-persuna li qed tagħmel is-sess orali jew għandha infezzjonijiet sesswali oħrajn.

Tisliġ ta' labar, siringi u apparat iehor li jintużaw waqt it-tehied ta' droga ma' xi persuna/i li huma infettati: dan jista' jwassal għal espożizzjoni għad-demem tal-persuna infettata. Jekk ammont suffiċjenti ta' demm infettat jidhol fil-ġisem, l-HIV tista' tiġi trasmessa.

Trasmissjoni mill-omm għat-tarbija: it-tarbija tista' takwista l-HIV mingħand l-omm qabel u waqt il-hlas jew waqt it-treddih wara l-hlas. Ir-riskju ta' din it-trasmissjoni jonqos meta wiehed jieħu it-trattament anti-virali waqt it-tqala u l-hlas. Meta l-omm jkollha ammont ta' virus fid-demem għoli jista' jkun hemm bżonn ta' ċesarja biex tnaqqas ir-riskju ta' trasmissjoni lit-tarbija u li l-omm ma treddax wara twelid.

Sinjali u sintomi

Inizjalment xi hadd infettat bl-HIV jista' ma juriex l-ebda sintomu. Jekk ikun hemm xi sintomi, dawn jistaw ikunu:

- ▶ Telf ta' piż
- ▶ Dijarea
- ▶ Raxx tal-ġilda speċjalment fuq il-wiċċ, ġenitali jew il-warrani zieda fl-ulċeri ikkawżati mill-Herpes jew infezzjonijiet bhal traxx fil-halq u l-ġenitali
- ▶ Għaraq bil-Hejl
- ▶ Ghajja
- ▶ Nawżeja u telf ta' aptit
- ▶ Glandoli limfatiċi minfuħin fl-għonq, żaqq jew taht l-idejn
- ▶ Disturbi tal-influenza.

L-uniku mod li tkun taf jekk intix infettat bl-HIV huwa li tagħmel it-testijiet.

Kif tista' tipprevjeni l-HIV?

Bhalissa ma hemm ebda tilqima kontra l-HIV. Madankollu, hemm modi biex jipprevjenu l-infezzjoni tal-HIV. Interventi effettivi ta' prevenzjoni tal-HIV jinkludu:

- ▶ Astinenza minn sess
- ▶ Tkun lejali lejn is-sieheb/sieħba tiegħek
- ▶ Użu ta' kondoms konsistenti u korretti
- ▶ Evita tisliġ ta' labar: jeżistu programmi ta' tibdil ta' labar għal persuni li jużaw id-droga biex jevitaw trasmissjoni tal-HIV billi jipprovdur labar nodfa u r-rimi ta' dawk użati f'reċipjenti apposta.
- ▶ Għamel test tal-HIV & fittex il-kura kmieni biex nipprevjenu aktar hsara lis-sistema immunitarja.

Trattament għal-HIV

Tobba speċjalisti jippreskrivu medicini antiretrovirali li jgħinu jnaqqsu l-hsara li ssir mill-infezzjoni tal-HIV billi jnaqqsu it-tagħbija virali u jżieded in-numru ta' ċelluli CD4 T li jgħinu lis-sistema immunitarja tiġġieled kontra l-infezzjonijiet opportunistici. Huwa ta' importanza kbira li jitieħdu l-medicini kif preskritti u regolament biex is-sistema ta' trattament tinżamm ta' suċċess u li tipprevjenu l-virus milli jsiru rezistenti għall-medicini. Sapport soċjali u emozzjonali huwa wkoll importanti biex tgħin persuni jgħixu bl-HIV u jagħmlu l-aħjar minn haġġithom. Huwa importanti wkoll li tittikel dieta bilanċjata, isir eżerċizzju regolari, waqfien mit-tipjip u evitat il-konsum eċċessiv ta' alkohol.

Wiehed jista' jikseb l-għajnuna

GU Klinik	21 227981
Detox	2388 5300
Direttorat għal Promozzjoni tas-Saħha u l-Prevenzjoni tal-Mard	2326 6000
Medical Outpatients 1 (MOP1)	2545 7450/7451



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HIV



HIV can enter the body through open cuts, sores or breaks in the skin; through mucous membranes, such as those inside the anus or vagina or through direct injection. There are several ways by which this can happen:

Sexual contact with an infected person: Anal or vaginal intercourse without a condom with an infected partner/s. Even though unprotected oral sex is less risky than unprotected vaginal and anal sex, the risk is not zero. The risk of acquiring HIV infection is greater for the person giving oral sex rather than the person receiving oral sex. The risk of acquiring HIV increases when the person performing oral sex has cuts or sores around or in their mouth or throat, if the person receiving oral sex ejaculates in the mouth of the person performing oral sex; or if the person receiving oral sex has another Sexually Acquired Infection.

Sharing needles, syringes or other injection equipment with someone who is infected. This can lead to exposure to an infected person's blood. If sufficient infected blood enters one's body, HIV is likely to be transmitted.

Mother-to-child transmission. A baby can acquire HIV from an infected mother before or during birth, or through breastfeeding after birth. However the risks of mother-to-child transmission of HIV can be reduced by the appropriate use of HIV treatment; by having; and by not.

What are the signs and symptoms of HIV?

Initially, someone infected with HIV may show no symptoms. If any symptoms are present they may include:

- ▶ weight loss
- ▶ diarrhoea
- ▶ skin rashes, especially on face, genitals or anus
- ▶ increase in herpes ulcers or thrush infections in your mouth and genitals
- ▶ night sweats
- ▶ tiredness
- ▶ nausea or loss of appetite
- ▶ swollen lymph glands in the neck, groin or armpits
- ▶ flu-like illness.

The only way to know if you are infected with HIV is to get tested.

How can you prevent HIV?

There is currently no vaccine for HIV. However, there are ways to prevent HIV infection. Effective HIV prevention interventions include:

- ▶ Abstain from sex
- ▶ Be faithful
- ▶ Use condoms consistently and correctly
- ▶ Avoid sharing of needles: needle exchange programmes can help to prevent HIV transmission among drug users by providing clean needles and disposing of used ones in specific recipients.
- ▶ Do an HIV test & seek early health care: get early treatment to prevent further damage to the immune system.

Treatment for HIV

Specialist physicians prescribe antiretroviral drugs which help slow down the effects of HIV infection by reducing the viral load and increasing the number of CD4 T-cells which help the immune system fight against opportunistic infections. It is of great importance to take the medications as prescribed and regularly to maintain a successful treatment regimen and to help prevent the virus from becoming resistant to the drugs. Social and emotional support is also important to help persons live with HIV and make the best out of their lives. It is also important to eat a balanced diet, exercise regularly, stop smoking and avoid excessive alcohol consumption.

Where to go for help

GU clinic on	21 227981
Detox on	2388 5300
Directorate of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention	2326 6000
Medical Outpatients 1 (MOP1)	2545 7450/7451



Health Promotion & Disease Prevention Directorate

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