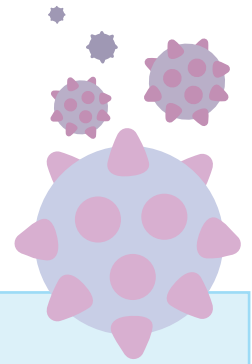


# What are HIV & AIDS?

HIV is an abbreviation for **Human Immunodeficiency Virus**. This virus attacks the body's white blood cells and weakens the person's immune system. AIDS, or **Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome**, is acquired in the last stages of HIV.



## The Stages of HIV


### Primary Infection

Viral Load: 

Often, flu-like symptoms may not appear until after a few weeks from initial infection. Viral load is highest during this stage.




### Clinical Latency

Viral Load: 

This stage lasts for an average of ten years and often there are no symptoms. Viral load also settles to a low point.

### AIDS

Viral Load: 

AIDS is the last stage of the disease. By this time, the immune system has sustained much damage. CD4 cells are below 200 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>.

## The Science of

# TRANSMISSION

HIV is transmitted through **completely preventable means**.



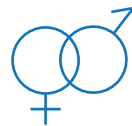
**HIV-contaminated needles or syringes**



**From HIV-positive mother to child during pregnancy**



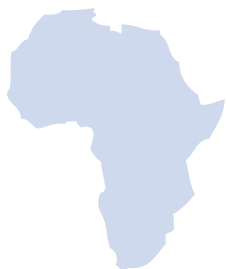
**Blood transfusion with HIV-contaminated blood**



**Unprotected sex with HIV-positive person**

## The Types of

# EPIDEMICS



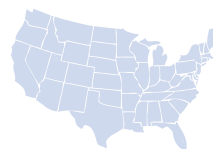
### 1 Generalized Epidemics

Transmission is mainly outside of vulnerable groups.

**Common transmission method:**

Heterosexual intercourse

**Example** Epidemics across Africa



### 2 Concentrated Epidemics

Transmission through vulnerable groups such as sex workers.

**Common transmission method:**

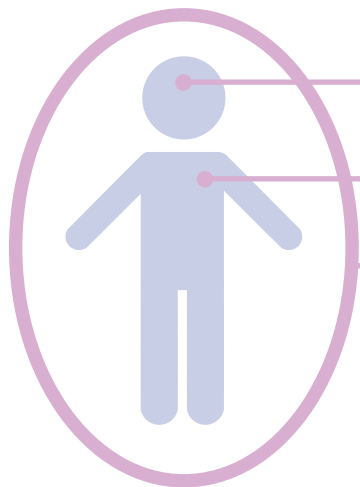
contaminated needles, homosexual intercourse

**Example** Epidemics in US & Thailand

**Each type of epidemic requires a different response. Knowing the type of epidemic will help you to choose the appropriate intervention.**

# Response to HIV/AIDS

## PERSON-CENTERED RESPONSE



Responds to the capacity of the person to **make responsible choices**

Focuses on the **intrinsic dignity** of the person

Based on a **holistic perception** in terms of the person's needs in prevention, treatment, care and support

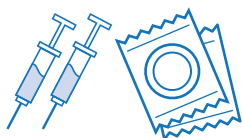
### Prevention Approaches

## HARM REDUCTION VS RISK AVOIDANCE

### Harm Reduction

Focuses on reducing the harm in high-risk activities that lead to infection.

Examples:



Needle & Syringe Programs

Condom Distribution

### Risk Avoidance

Focuses on changing the underlying behavior that puts a person in a position of harm.

Examples:



Mutual Fidelity

Delay of Sexual Debut

- ✗ **Harm reduction** promotes the continuation of high-risk behaviors which are often inherently destructive.
- ✓ **Risk avoidance** promotes a primary behavior change that will place a person at lower risk of contracting HIV.

### Local Intervention Strategies

Response to HIV/AIDS epidemics are most successful when they **come from within the affected communities themselves**, and person-centered responses are most appropriate if they understand the context in which the infected person lives.

### Case Study: Uganda

Uganda's response was **mobilized by faith-based organizations and prominent cultural, political and community figures**. They used a "**zero grazing**" message to convey the importance of faithfulness in combatting HIV transmission. Ugandans were able to identify with the concept.

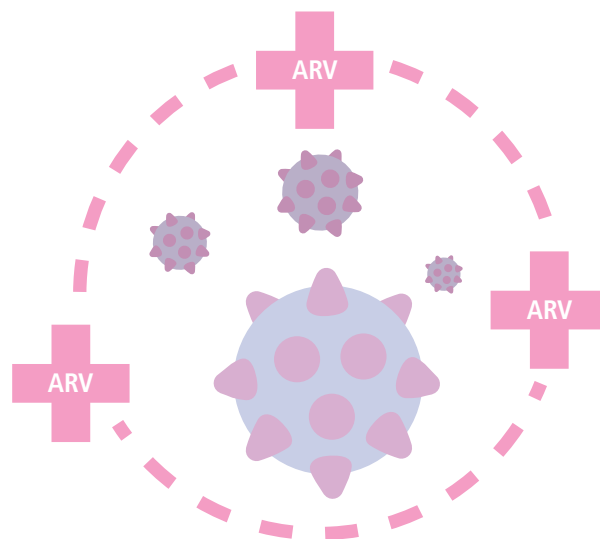


## Person-centered **TREATMENT**

### Antiretroviral Treatment

Antiretroviral therapy is a combination of at least three antiretroviral drugs that work by suppressing viral replication and progression of the disease.

**It can seriously decrease mortality rates while increasing life expectancy.**



### Antiretroviral Treatment as Prevention

Early treatment with Antiretrovirals (ARVs) drastically reduces the risk of transmitting HIV because ARVs decrease viral load to a level that makes it impossible to transmit HIV to another person.

**It also reduces to almost zero perinatal and breastfeeding transmission from HIV-positive mother to child.**

## UNAIDS in **GLOBAL HIV/AIDS POLICY**

**The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS** (UNAIDS) is the UN body charged with addressing global HIV and AIDS epidemic. It is considered an authority on HIV/AIDS within the global health policy community.

### Programs of UNAIDS

#### ✦ Antiretroviral Treatment

UNAIDS' person-centered efforts focuses on preventing mother-to-child transmission. It aims to eliminate new HIV infections among children by providing HIV testing and access to ARVs.

#### ✦ Condom Use and Normalization of Sex Work

UNAIDS supports the use of condoms and the legalization of sex work in the fight against HIV transmission. In reality, condom use can encourage riskier sexual behavior. It is also possible to have anti-discrimination laws to protect sex workers without legalizing or tolerating risky behavior.

#### ✦ Harm Reduction for Injecting Drug Users

UNAIDS promotes measures that allow access to sterile injection equipment, opioid substitution therapy, and providing HIV prevention information for safer injecting. This program does not address changing the underlying risky behavior.