



10 MYTHS ABOUT AIDS

MYTH	REALITY												
<p>It's contagious through:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>kissing</td> <td>hugging</td> </tr> <tr> <td>saliva</td> <td>a handshake</td> </tr> <tr> <td>sharing food</td> <td>sweat</td> </tr> <tr> <td>urine</td> <td>tears</td> </tr> <tr> <td>the air</td> <td>sneezing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>toilet seats</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	kissing	hugging	saliva	a handshake	sharing food	sweat	urine	tears	the air	sneezing	toilet seats		<p>It's hard to "catch". HIV is spread only when:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) a body fluid (semen, blood/menstrual blood, vaginal fluid, breast milk) with high concentrations of HIV 2) enters the body of someone else through an activity (like intercourse, sharing needles, tattooing) 3) that gets into the bloodstream (through the vagina, anus, urethra, open cuts).
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HIV and AIDS are the same thing.	You can have HIV for years and not have AIDS. HIV is a virus that weakens your immune system; AIDS is when you have HIV <i>and</i> one or more AIDS-defining illnesses.												
Only "immoral" people like prostitutes, junkies, gays, and sluts get it. Women who don't do drugs don't get it. Women in long term relationships can't get it.	Anybody can get it. HIV is a virus, not a moral authority. If given the opportunity, HIV will infect anyone. Women who jog daily and eat tofu can get infected. Women in long term marriages can get infected. Women are getting HIV faster than any other group.												
It's an automatic death sentence. It's over; it's the end of your life. It's definitely the end of your sex life.	Many people who have HIV live long and healthy lives. And practicing safe sex can be more fun than unsafe sex (more doodads).												
You only have to practice safe sex in the first few months of a relationship. Once you get to know your partner, you're safe.	Unless you know where your partner is 24 hours a day, <i>and</i> every single person s/he ever had sex with, you can't always know for sure.												
Lesbians don't sleep with men so they can't get infected. Women can't infect each other.	It is more difficult for women to infect other women (easier for a man to infect a woman), but it can happen. And some lesbians do sleep with men.												
Women can protect themselves by insisting on condom use.	Women don't use condoms, men do! Women can be accused of being demanding (ball-busting), or unfaithful (screwing around), or risk violence if they request condom use.												
You only get it if you have anal sex, and only gays have anal sex.	There are many ways, with no anal sex, that you could get HIV. Also, heterosexuals (straight people) do have anal sex.												
Women can't/shouldn't have babies if they have HIV.	With good health care, chances are high that an infant will be born without HIV.												
If you have HIV, you are damaged goods. You did something bad to deserve it. You must have had perverted sex. You're a freak.	HIV doesn't discriminate against race, sex, class, education, how you dress, where you live. If a friend of yours had diabetes or cancer, would you blame her/him for it?												