






# HIV Facts

## International Statistics

The facts:

-  There are over 33 million people living with HIV worldwide.
-  Since AIDS was first identified over 20 years ago, more than 25 million people have died.
-  There are more than 11 million children who have lost one or both parents to AIDS in Africa.
-  Worldwide about half of those infected by HIV are women.
-  In some of the worst affected countries in sub-Saharan Africa rates of HIV infection are as high as one in three.







Further information:

UNAIDS website - [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org)

AVERT website - [www.avert.org](http://www.avert.org)

## UK Statistics

The facts:

-  There are more than 90,000 people living with HIV in the UK.
  -  There are around 1,000 young people under 18 accessing HIV care in the UK.
  -  More than 1 in 4 people in the UK who are living with HIV do not know that they are infected.
  -  An estimated 20,000 children live in a family affected by HIV in the UK.
  -  Approximately 500 people die every year in the UK from illnesses related to their HIV infection.
- Between 6,000 and 7,000 people are diagnosed with HIV in the UK each year.
-  Because of good treatments, there are fewer HIV-related deaths, so the number of people living with HIV in the UK is growing each year.

Further information:

Health Protection Agency website - [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk)

NAT website - [www.nat.org.uk](http://www.nat.org.uk)

# HIV Facts

## What are HIV and AIDS?

HIV stands for the Human Immunodeficiency Virus. HIV attacks the body's immune system - the body's defence against diseases.



AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. A person is considered to have AIDS when the immune system has become so weak that it can no longer fight off a whole range of diseases with which it would normally cope. Because of effective treatments, most people living with HIV in the UK will not go on to develop AIDS.

## How is HIV transmitted?




The facts:

HIV is passed on from one person to another via body fluids – blood, semen, pre-ejaculate (pre-cum), vaginal fluids and breast milk.






In the UK today, the main routes of transmission are:

-  through vaginal or anal sex without a condom
-  by sharing injecting equipment or needles for injecting drugs or tattooing.

Less commonly, HIV is passed on through:

-  oral sex (if the person performing oral sex has ulcers or gum problems or has recently brushed or flossed their teeth)
-  mother-to-baby transmission, although with the right medical interventions there is less than 1-in-100 chance of this happening
-  breast feeding (where the mother is HIV positive).

HIV is not passed on by:

-  hugging, kissing or holding hands
-  sharing a bath or a swimming pool
-  sharing a toilet seat
-  sharing cutlery or drinks with someone else
-  someone spitting at you or biting you.

# HIV Facts

## People most affected by HIV in the UK

### The facts:

HIV can infect anyone who is sexually active. However, within the UK some communities do have higher rates of infection, particularly gay and bisexual men, as well as African men and women.

There are now more straight people than gay and bisexual men living with HIV in the UK; this is because many people, particularly Africans, were infected outside the UK. The majority of people who become infected in this country are gay and bisexual men.

But the reality is that people in the UK of all ages and from all sorts of backgrounds and ethnic groups are infected with HIV, and the number is growing. The Health Protection Agency (HPA) estimate that in 2009 nearly 25% of people diagnosed in the UK with HIV were neither gay/bisexual or Black African.

It is important to remember that HIV is not a 'gay disease' or an 'African disease' - there may be a young person in your class who is HIV positive or who has a family member who is infected.

### Further information:

Health Protection Agency website - [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk)

## HIV Treatment

### The facts:

There is no cure for HIV but since 1995 there have been drugs available to treat it.

Treatment for HIV is known as anti-retroviral therapy (ART). Most people starting treatment for the first time now take just one or two pills a day, but treatments can be quite complicated and don't always work. For some people, particularly those diagnosed some time ago, it can be difficult to find the right combination of drugs and forgetting to take treatment at the right time can result in complications and drug-resistance.

ART is now very effective. However most HIV drugs also have some side-effects ranging from diarrhoea, nausea and prolonged headaches to changes in body shape, depression and other mental health issues.

### Further information:

NAM - [www.aidsmap.com](http://www.aidsmap.com)

**There is a selection of PowerPoint presentations, including one on HIV statistics, available to download from [www.nat.org.uk](http://www.nat.org.uk)**

# HIV Facts

## Living with HIV in the UK

The facts:

Some people living with HIV in the UK still experience prejudice and discrimination which can be more difficult than living with the physical effects of HIV.

Stigma and discrimination are often the result of ignorance about how HIV is passed on and unfounded fear about becoming infected.

Because of the communities in the UK who are most affected, HIV-related discrimination is often exacerbated by homophobia, racism or negative attitudes towards immigrants and asylum seekers.

People living with HIV report experiencing stigma and discrimination most frequently:

 in the workplace

 in the NHS – particularly amongst healthcare workers who aren't HIV specialists (e.g. GPs and dentists)

 in the media – where reporting of HIV is often inaccurate and misleading and fuels existing prejudices

 amongst family and friends.

Today's young people are the employers, politicians, doctors, nurses, policy-makers and journalists of the future – making sure that they understand the facts about HIV and the impact stigma and discrimination has on people living with HIV can make a real difference in the long term.








Further information:

NAT website – [www.nat.org.uk](http://www.nat.org.uk)

# HIV Facts

## World AIDS Day and the red ribbon

The facts:

-  World AIDS Day is on 1 December. World AIDS Day was the very first international health day.
-  World AIDS Day was started by the World Health Organisation in 1988, in recognition of the need for a global response to addressing the HIV pandemic.
-  The red ribbon is the universally recognised symbol of HIV and is inextricably linked to World AIDS Day.
-  The red ribbon has been an international symbol of HIV awareness since 1991 when it was created by a group of US-based artists as a symbol of support for the growing number of people living with HIV.
-  Throughout the 1990s many celebrities wore red ribbons, encouraged in the UK by Princess Diana's high profile support for people living with HIV.
-  The red ribbon is worn across the world as a sign of support for people living with HIV.
-  Wearing a red ribbon is a simple and powerful way to challenge the stigma and prejudice surrounding HIV that prevents us from tackling the global epidemic. It also shows support for people living with HIV.

Further information:

World AIDS Day website – [www.worldaidsday.org](http://www.worldaidsday.org)