

IS THERE A TEST FOR A.I.D.S.

No. Researchers are now using a test (the H.T.L.V. 3 antibody test) which shows whether a person has been infected with H.T.L.V. 3 (the probable A.I.D.S. virus) at some time.

It does not show:

1. whether infection is still present.
2. whether any illness will develop.
3. whether the infection can be passed on.

It is therefore *not* a test for A.I.D.S.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU ARE TOLD YOU ARE H.T.L.V. 3 ANTIBODY TEST POSITIVE?

1. Don't panic — most people stay well.
2. Have sex only with your regular partner(s).
3. Talk again with the doctor who told you the result if you are unclear about anything.
4. The Terrence Higgins Trust exists to give you help and advice — see front for Helpline details.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU HAVE HAD SEX WITH SOMEONE WHO DEVELOPS A.I.D.S. (or has P.G.L. or is H.T.L.V. 3 antibody positive)
Again don't panic. Your risk of

is small. Consult a doctor at a Sexually Transmitted Diseases (V.D.) clinic.

WHY DO ONLY SOME PEOPLE INFECTED WITH THE VIRUS GET A.I.D.S.?

We do not know for certain, but we have some ideas.

1. Some people are born better able to fight this infection.
2. Other infections (syphilis, hepatitis, glandular fever, C.M.V., etc.) may make the A.I.D.S. virus more active in the body.
3. Many recreational drugs may reduce the body's ability to fight infection (this applies even to the heavy use of tobacco and alcohol).
4. Receiving other men's semen into your body may also reduce the body's ability to fight infection.

DO CONDOMS REDUCE THE RISK OF INFECTION WITH THE A.I.D.S. VIRUS?

We do not know. Anal sex carries a high risk of transmitting the virus. We worry that as condoms may easily tear or come off during anal sex they will not provide adequate protection. We recommend that you avoid anal sex except possibly with your regular partner(s). If you decide not to follow this advice condoms may offer some worthwhile protection.

THE TERRENCE HIGGINS TRUST

A registered charity to inform, advise and help on A.I.D.S. (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome).
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HOW CAN YOU REDUCE YOUR RISK OF GETTING A.I.D.S.?

1. Have sex with fewer men.
2. Avoid anal sex, except possibly with your regular partner(s).
3. Have sex only with men whom you know to be in good health and who have had few other sexual partners.
4. Avoid sex with men who have been sexually active in North America in the last three years.
5. Since the virus has been found even in saliva, perhaps the only safe sex is mutual masturbation, body rubbing, and dry kissing.

Until we know more you should **NOT** give blood or carry an organ donor card.

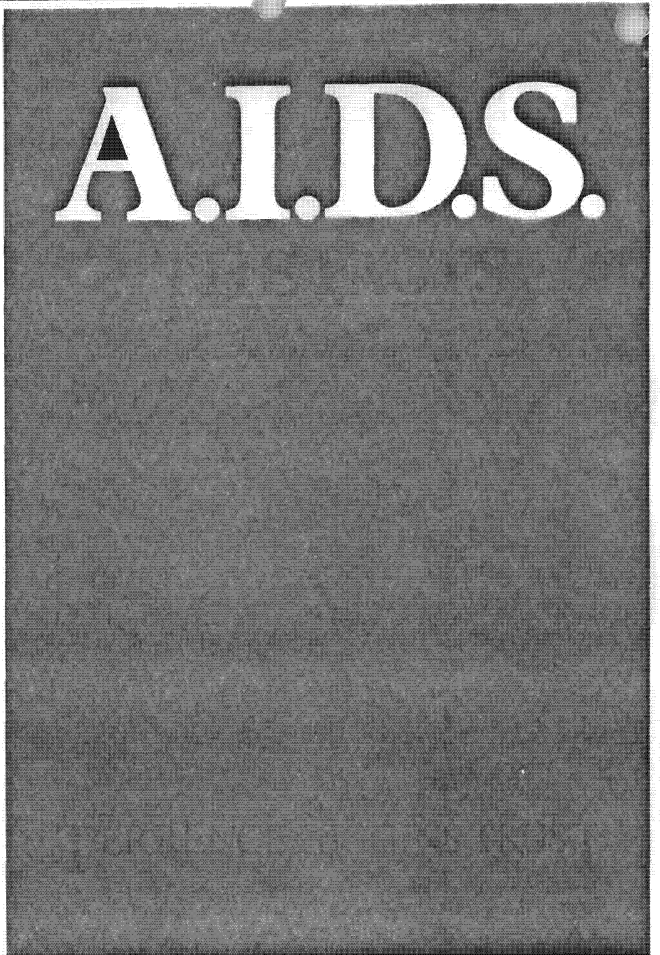
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HELPLINE

01.278 8745

8PM-10PM MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS

ITEM 3D OF 27/2/85



WHAT IS A.I.D.S.?

An abbreviation commonly used for 'Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome'. It is a complete or partial breakdown in the body's natural ability to fight off diseases which leaves the individual susceptible to some rare cancers and infections. Such infections are sometimes called 'opportunistic infections'.

WHAT CAUSES A.I.D.S.? HOW IS IT TRANSMITTED?

There is no conclusive evidence as to the causes of or transmission of A.I.D.S. The best that can be offered is informed speculation; inevitably this may need to be revised as more becomes known. It seems that A.I.D.S. is not passed on through casual social contact: for example, being in the same room, shaking hands or sharing the same toilet facilities. Several theories are being tested and many researchers believe that an infectious agent, probably a virus, causes a breakdown in the system of immunity. It is thought that such an agent is carried in the blood, and other body fluids e.g. saliva, urine etc. and it can be passed on by sexual contact, the shared use of injection needles, and by some blood products.

HOW WIDESPREAD IS A.I.D.S.?

Worldwide, at least 3,500 cases had been reported in February 1984, of which 38 cases were in the United Kingdom. The numbers have been increasing since 1979 when A.I.D.S. was first described; for example by June 1982 less than 1,000 had been reported.

HOW SERIOUS IS A.I.D.S.?

When the body is unable to fight infections effectively, many diseases,

including some which are normally regarded as minor, can progress unchecked and result in death. To date, fewer than 1 in 4 people with A.I.D.S. have survived more than 3 years after diagnosis of the disease.

WHO IS AT RISK FROM A.I.D.S.?

While almost anyone can potentially get A.I.D.S., some individuals are more at risk than others. They are sexually active homosexual and bisexual men; people receiving blood products, for example, haemophiliacs; drug abusers who share needles and syringes; and the sexual partners of those at risk. In the U.S.A., just over 70% of A.I.D.S. cases were in homosexual or bisexual men.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF A.I.D.S.?

- *Profound fatigue*, persisting for weeks but with no obvious cause.
- *Unexpected weight loss*, of more than 10lbs. in 2 months.
- *Persistent fever or night sweats*, lasting several weeks.
- *Persistent shortness of breath and dry cough*, not from smoking or bronchitis, and lasting too long for 'flu'.
- *New pink to purple blotches*, painless, flat or raised, like a bruise, but hard and getting larger: they can be anywhere on the skin including in the mouth or on the eyelids.
- *Swollen glands*, especially in the neck or armpits.
- *Thick, white coating to the tongue or throat*: Thrush.
- But remember, most of these symptoms occur in common illnesses readily diagnosed and treated by a doctor. If you have some of these symptoms, it is not confirmation that you have A.I.D.S.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

If you have any of the symptoms of A.I.D.S. and you fall within an identified risk group, you should consult a doctor, preferably at a clinic specialising in sexually transmitted diseases (V.D.). You can get the address of your nearest clinic from your telephone directory (listed under venereal disease) or from the Trust.

WHAT IS THE TREATMENT FOR A.I.D.S.?

There is to date no vaccine, serum or medicine which can prevent someone from developing A.I.D.S. But opportunistic infections and cancers can be treated with varying success. Research is now underway to find a method of reversing the breakdown in the system of immunity.

WORDS YOU MAY HAVE SEEN IN CONNECTION WITH A.I.D.S.

Kaposi's Sarcoma (K.S.): a previously rare form of skin cancer; more than 1 in 4 people with A.I.D.S. have it. To begin with, K.S. may look like a bruise, but unlike a bruise it persists and may get larger and more widespread.

Pneumocystis Carinii Pneumonia (P.C.P.): a rare form of pneumonia;

more than half the people with A.I.D.S. have it. People in good health are not likely to catch it.

Thrush (also known as Candida or Monilia): the oral and vaginal forms of this infection are quite common in healthy people. In A.I.D.S. this infection is very frequent and may become serious.

Herpes: as with Thrush this infection may become serious in A.I.D.S.

HOW CAN YOU OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION ABOUT A.I.D.S.?

This leaflet has been compiled by the Terrence Higgins Trust with the help and advice of doctors. If you need further information, you can write to the Trust at the address given. A stamped addressed envelope would be gratefully accepted but is not essential. You can also telephone the Trust's AIDS helpline on Mondays to Fridays between 8pm and 10pm.

N.B. Haemophiliacs requiring further information may prefer to call the Haemophilia Society on 01-407 1010 between 8.30am and 5.00pm Mondays to Fridays. An answerphone is in operation on both the above lines when the offices are unmanned.

PLEASE REMEMBER
A.I.D.S. IS A SERIOUS DISEASE, BUT A RARE ONE

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