

HIV QUIZ

PART 1 ANSWERS

1 What does HIV stand for?

HIV stands for Human Immuno-deficiency Virus

The virus is connected to humans only, and cannot be passed on through contact with insects or animals. The virus affects our body's defence system so that it cannot fight off certain infections.

2 What does AIDS stand for?

AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

A deficient immune system is 'acquired' by catching the virus 'HIV' that causes AIDS. You cannot catch AIDS. AIDS is a syndrome, i.e. a collection of infections.

3 HIV is a blood borne virus.

4 HIV can infect cells in the blood and in other tissues including the brain. It primarily infects cells of the immune system, in particular T4 lymphocytes (sometimes referred to as CD4 cells). These cells are important in coordinating the immune response. As these T4 cells eventually decline in number an infected person's immune system becomes damaged and vulnerable to certain infections, known as "opportunistic infection and tumours".

When certain "opportunistic infections" occur such as: PCP – a form of pneumonia and Kaposi's sarcoma – a skin cancer, a person is considered to have HIV disease/ AIDS.

5 Nobody knows where HIV came from

There have been many theories: African Green Monkeys, Pig on the Mexican boarder and a leakage from a research laboratory.

It is debatable that if we knew the origin we could find a cure.

Unfortunately reports that it came from Africa has fuelled racism in believing that black Africans are to blame, and similarly report that it was a "gay plague" from San Francisco and New York has fuelled homophobia.

6 Nobody knows how long HIV has been around.

In medical terms it is a relatively new virus. Cases were isolated in the 70's in Africa and in the early 80's in the USA. There are two recognised strain, HIV 1 and HIV 2. HIV -2 is very rare in the UK, highly concentrated in West Africa. It takes much longer to spread. Recently a new strain was discovered HIV -0. Contracting more than one strain complicates and often makes combination therapy useless.

Within two decade a family of viruses had moved from total obscurity to infect millions of people. The current number of people worldwide living with HIV/ AIDS is 42 million. There were 3.1 million AIDS deaths in 2002. 5 million people were newly infected during 202. Of these 800.000 were children and 2 million were women. 14000 new infection happened every day in 2002 – 95% of these were in the developing world.

Since the beginning of the epidemic 21 million people have died