



## HIV ➤ Some Common Terms

### AIDS

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome: A group of illnesses of the immune system caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). There is no vaccine and no cure.

### ANAL SEX

When a person puts their penis into their male or female partner's anus (bottom) for sexual pleasure.

### ANTI BODY

A product of the body's immune system which fights against infection.

### ANTI-RETROVIRAL DRUG (ARV)

A kind of drug used to fight HIV

### ASYMPTOMATIC

When someone with an infection shows no symptoms. The person may not even know they have an illness.

### CELL

The smallest part of a human body. The body is made up of millions of cells. Alone each cell is too small to be seen.

### CONDOM

A thin rubber (latex) bag which fits on a man's erect penis (like a glove fits on a hand). It is used to stop pregnancy and the spread of sexually transmissible infections, including HIV

### CONFIDENTIALITY

A rule that stops health workers, doctors and interpreters from repeating what people tell them or talking about their health to other people. A worker can only repeat what a client says with the client's permission or in very special situations.

### CONTAGIOUS

An infection which can pass from one person to another.

### DAM

A square piece of latex used to cover a woman's vagina or anus or a man's anus during oral sex.

### DIAGNOSIS

What a doctor decides after looking at a patient's signs, symptoms and medical history; the conclusion a doctor may reach after examining, doing tests and/or talking with their patients.

### DISCRIMINATION

Treating someone unfairly because they are different (immigrants, women, persons living with HIV/ AIDS or persons with a disability). In Australia many types of discrimination are against the law.

### DISEASE

Illness, sickness.

### DRUG RESISTANCE

When the immune system or body becomes so used to a drug that the drug is no longer able to work.

### **GAY**

A word used to describe a man who is sexually attracted to, or has sex with, other men; a member of the gay community.

### **GONORRHOEA**

A disease you can get from having unprotected sex. It is prevented by using condoms during sex and cured by antibiotics.

### **HEPATITIS**

An inflammation of the liver usually caused by the Hepatitis viruses. The most important types are hepatitis A, B and C.

### **HETEROSEXUAL**

A word used to describe someone who is sexually attracted to, or has sex with, people of the opposite sex.

### **HIV**

The Human Immunodeficiency Virus which can cause AIDS.

### **HIV POSITIVE**

A person becomes HIV positive when they have been infected with HIV. The word 'positive' is used because testing the blood shows that HIV is in their body. A negative test would be one where the virus was not shown to be present.

### **HOMOSEXUAL**

A word used to describe a man who is sexually attracted to, or has sex with, other men; or a woman who is sexually attracted to, or has sex with, other women.

### **IMMUNE SYSTEM**

The body's system for fighting infections and disease. HIV destroys part of the immune system so that a person with HIV is less able to fight off infections.

### **INFECTION**

The development of a micro-organism (germ, microbe) in or on the body. Infections may lead to the infected person becoming ill. Infections can be caused by a virus, bacteria, fungus or parasite.

### **INFORMED CONSENT**

When a person agrees to a certain test or treatment. A person (patient) must agree to a treatment before the treatment takes place. The patient must have all the information he/she needs before making a decision about the treatment.

### **INJECTING DRUG USER (IDU)**

An expression used to describe a person who takes drugs by using a needle and syringe to put drugs into the blood or into a muscle.

### **LESBIAN**

A word used to describe a woman who is sexually attracted, or has sex with, other women. A member of the Lesbian community. See also homosexual.

### **LUBE OR LUBRICANT**

A slippery liquid. When talking about safe sex a lubricant is a slippery water-based liquid (jelly) that should be used with a condom to stop the condom ripping or tearing.

### NEEDLE EXCHANGE

A service where you can get new needles and syringes for free and have your used needles disposed of.

### OPPORTUNISTIC INFECTION

An infection that quickly spreads because of a person's weakened immune system. The immune system may be weak because of HIV. Opportunistic infections would not normally affect a healthy person.

### PAEDIATRIC

Branch of medicine that deals with the medical care and health of infants, children, and adolescents.

### PENIS

The sex parts of the man.

### PENETRATION

Putting an erect penis into the mouth, anus or vagina.

### PERSON LIVING WITH HIV/ AIDS

A person who has become infected with HIV. (A person with HIV may in the future develop AIDS.)

### SAFE SEX

Sexual contact when there is no risk of catching or passing on HIV and/ or sexually transmissible infections

### SEMEN OR SPERM

The liquid which comes out of the penis during sex when a man is very sexually excited.

### SEXUAL INTERCOURSE

See penetration.

### SEXUAL HEALTH

Women's and men's ability to enjoy and express their sexuality free from risk of sexually transmissible infections, unwanted pregnancy, violence and/or discrimination.

### STI (SEXUALLY TRANSMISSIBLE INFECTION)

A disease which can be passed from one person to another during sex. HIV is an STI, but it can be passed through blood to blood contact and from mother to child during pregnancy, childbirth or from breast milk.

### SIDE EFFECT

A result of taking a drug that is not its main purpose.

### TEST

A way of finding an illness by taking blood or body fluids from a person and carefully looking at them

### TRANSMISSION

The passing of a disease from one person to another.

### TREATMENT

Something that a person does so that they can stay healthy or get better. Treatments can involve taking Western medicine, Chinese medicine, herbal medicine and/or changes in

lifestyle.

### UNPROTECTED SEX

Having sex without using condoms or dams.

### VAGINA

A woman's sex parts.

### VAGINAL FLUID

The natural lubricant inside the vagina.

### VIRAL LOAD

The amount of a virus (for example, HIV or hepatitis C) that is found in a person's blood if they are infected with that virus.

### VIRUS

A germ (microbe, micro-organism) which antibiotics cannot fight. HIV and hepatitis A, B and C are viruses.

