

HOW IS HIV TRANSMITTED?

There are four fluids that transmit HIV

- Blood
- Vaginal fluid
- Semen
- Breast milk

When someone is infected with HIV they may transmit the virus to other people. Most people become infected by having vaginal, oral, or anal sex with an infected person; sharing a needle with someone who is infected; from an infected mother during her pregnancy, or drinking the breast milk of an infected woman.

Getting a blood transfusion could be risky before 1985, but now the blood supply is screened very carefully and the risk is extremely low. Donating blood has NO risk of HIV infection.

There are no documented cases of HIV being transmitted by tears, sweat, urine or saliva, but it is possible to become infected by having oral sex, especially if you have open sores in your mouth or bleeding gums.

Risky behavior

Behaviors that have resulted in the most reported cases of HIV are:

- Unprotected Anal Intercourse
- Unprotected Vaginal Intercourse
- Sharing needles

Pregnancy

A pregnant woman with HIV should receive appropriate antiviral treatment from her healthcare provider to prevent her newborn from becoming infected. The woman should be treated during pregnancy and during labor. The newborn must be treated after delivery for six months.

Can I catch HIV or AIDS from mosquitoes?

No. Often people wonder why humans can't get HIV from mosquitoes. The human T cell is a very specific host cell for HIV. When a mosquito feeds on a person with HIV in his or her blood, the HIV enters the insect's gut, which does not contain human T cells. The virus is broken down by the mosquito's digestive system, since the virus has no host cell in which to reproduce.



Nebraska AIDS Education and Training Center

A collaboration of University of Nebraska Medical Center and Nebraska AIDS Project

For more information on transmission, you may call the Nebraska AIDS Hotline at 1-800-782-AIDS or Nebraska AIDS Project at 402-552-9260. HIV/AIDS Basic Trainings or in-services on specific topics are available through the Nebraska AIDS Education and Training Center.