



## HIV Myth or Fact?

### **MYTH**

A person can contract HIV by having casual contact with classmates or colleagues who are infected.

### **FACT**

HIV is a very fragile virus once outside the body and it dies quickly. You CAN NOT get HIV from the everyday casual contact you have with people. You can engage in your usual daily activities, such as working in a group setting, shaking hands, eating in restaurants, swimming in public pools, and using public restrooms, without any risk of getting HIV infection.

### **MYTH**

A person can get HIV from a mosquito bite.

### **FACT**

HIV is NOT transmitted through insects from evidence to date.

### **MYTH**

A person can not transmit HIV if they are taking medications.

### **FACT**

Medications do not prevent an HIV infected person from contracting or transmitting the virus. HIV is a life-long disease that there is currently no cure for. Medications reduce the amount of HIV in a person's blood to keep their immune system healthy.

### **MYTH**

You can tell if a person has HIV by the way they look.

### **FACT**

People can have HIV for many years without showing any symptoms or signs of illness. During this time a person can still transmit HIV to others. The only way to know for sure if someone is infected is to get an HIV test.

### **MYTH**

You can get HIV by getting a blood transfusion.

### **FACT**

Since 1985, when a blood test for HIV was put into use, the chances of getting HIV from blood transfusions have become extremely small in this country. The sterile procedures used to collect blood prevent any risk of infection to a donor.

### **MYTH**

Only people who have done something wrong get HIV.

### **FACT**

HIV has no boundaries and affects people of all cultures, backgrounds, and religions.

### **MYTH**

A person can transmit HIV through tears, sweat and saliva.

### **FACT**

A person can NOT transmit HIV through tears, sweat, or saliva as long as these secretions do not also contain fluids proven to transmit HIV. The fluids that can transmit HIV are blood, semen, vaginal secretions, and breast milk.

