HIV & AIDS

H - Stands for Human, because it is only found in humans, NOT animals
I - Stands for Immunodeficiency, because it causes the immune system defense force to be deficient (not work properly)
V - Stands for Virus, which is one type of germ

Preventing HIV/AIDS

- Abstinence
- Waiting for the right person, time or age, or waiting for marriage to have sex
- Consistent and correct condom use
- Using condoms every time you have sex provides protection against HIV, pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Sticking to one sexual partner. Being faithful to the sexual partner you havez
- Behaviour Change. Adopting safer sex practices

Treatment of HIV

There is NO cure for HIV. However, there are drugs that can slow down the progress of HIV and thus slow down the damage to your immune system. These drugs are called antiretrovirals (ARV's). ARV's slow down the reproduction rate of HIV. Once the virus is reproducing at a slower rate, it is less able to harm your immune system. If your immune system is functioning properly, your body is less likely to become sick. Since ARV's slow down the damage to your immune system, if they are used properly and consistently, they allow you to live a longer, healthier life.

What is the Immune System?
A= Acquired • I&D=Immunde Deficiency S=Syndrome

Inside our bodies, in our blood we have CD4 soldier cells (the immune system) They are our body's defense force. They work hard keeping us strong and healthy by attacking the germs. When germs come into our bodies, these soldier cells kill the germs. Therefore, the immune system is the body's defense system which protects you from diseases or infections.

Other names for the immune system include;

- White blood cells
- CD4 Cells
- T4 Cells
- Leucocytes

How HIV is transmitted?

There are three ways in which HIV can be transmitted;

1. Unprotected penetrative sex
2. Transmission through blood
3. Mother-to-child transmission

How HIV is NOT Transmitted

HIV/AIDS cannot be spread by:

- Sharing food
- Bed linen, door handles, telephones, towels, combs and brushes
- Swimming pools
- Kissing, hugging, shaking hands
- Toilet seats
- Mosquitoes, flies, or other insects
- Living or working with an infected person

Diagnosing HIV

HIV tests are used to detect the presence of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), the virus that causes acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), in bodily fluids like saliva, sexual fluids and blood. Such tests may detect antibodies, antigens (a substance not found in the body), or RNA (a specific strand of DNA). All HIV tests are subjected to a window period. The window period is the time it takes for your body to produce HIV antibodies after you have been exposed to HIV. In more than 97% of people, this period lasts between 6weeks and 3 months.

Types of HIV tests

- HIV rapid Test - (Antibody test)
- Eliza Test - (Antigen test)
- PCR HIV Test - (RNA test)

Centre for the study of Aids

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