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UNDERSTANDING AIDS

How?

What?

Why?

Who?



PACIFIC NEWS
AIDS IN PACIFIC

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SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

There is
world-wide epidemic
called Acquired Immune
Deficiency Syndrome
or more commonly known
as **AIDS**

There is no cure
and no vaccine
And. it is even in
the Pacific.



That is Scary.

BUT

AIDS can be prevented.

There are some things you need
to know and do to prevent it
and stop the spreading of it.

Loan no. 12045(B)

First let's look at our Immune System

Many kinds of germs cause many kinds of diseases- - colds, measles, mumps, red eye, etc. These germs get into the body in various ways. They may be inhaled or swallowed in food and drink, or be passed from hand to mouth, or from person to person, or from a bite of a mosquito or bug, or through a scratch or wound on the skin.



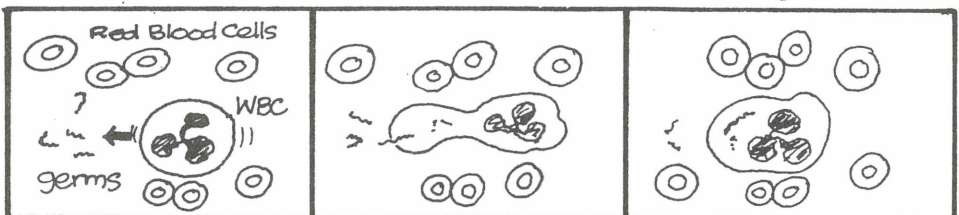
Luckily our body has several ways to keep germs out. It can also fight them once they have entered our body. This defense system is called the **immune system**.

When germs do enter the body, we become **infected**. But the body is still able to fight back. When germs enter the blood, white blood cells engulf and destroy the germs and stop them from reproducing. Of course, sometimes we need the help of medicines from doctors to kill the germs, but most of the time, our **immune system** does it:

White blood cell (WBC) approaches germs.

White blood cell engulfs germ.

White blood cell destroying germ.





... a tiny type
of a germ called
a Virus

... the Human Immunodeficiency Virus

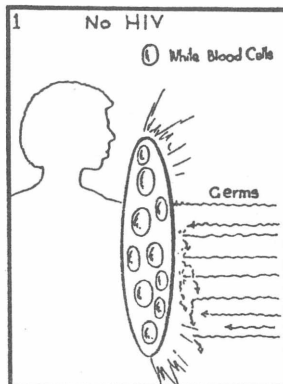
... or **HIV** for short.

The invisible virus called HIV enters the blood and can cause a great deal of trouble. HIV is particularly dangerous because over time it destroys the white blood cells that attack the germs that invade the body. When that happens, the person has no protection against many types of germs that cause diseases, and infections. The person may become so sick that he or she dies. In other words, HIV weakens or destroys the body's immune system so that the body is not able to fight infections.

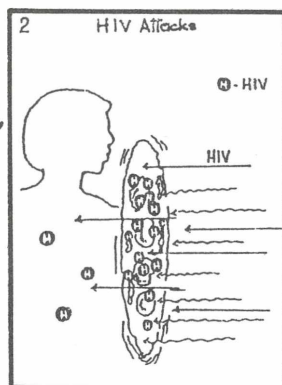
When HIV Invades the Body

HIV AND THE BODY'S DEFENCE SYSTEM

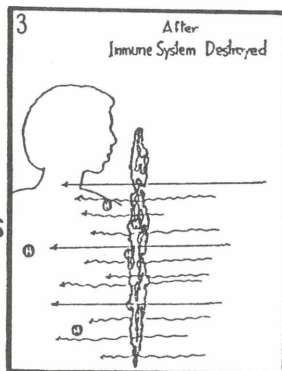
1. White blood cell destroy germs.



2. HIV attaches itself to white blood cells, enters, reproduces, and then infects other cells. The virus kills these white blood cells.



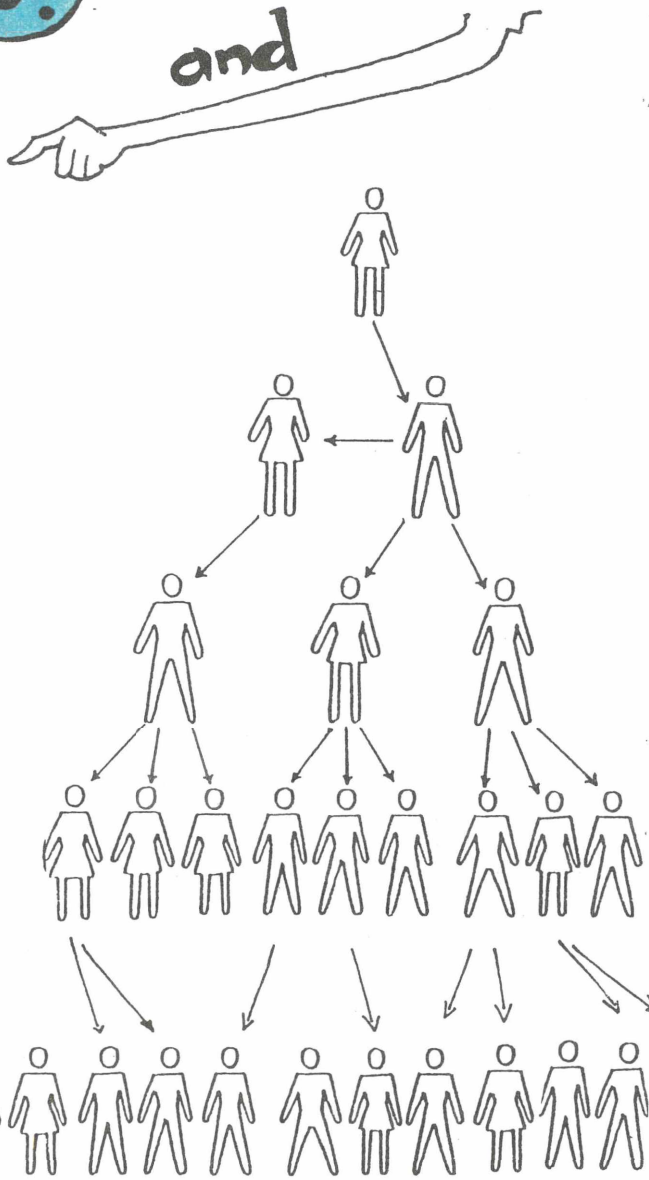
3. Without these white blood cells other germs can cause serious infections resulting in AIDS.

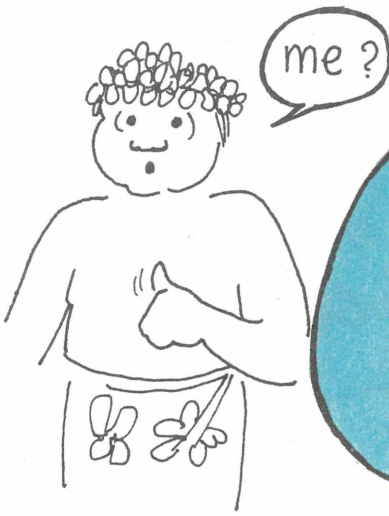


Why is AIDS so dangerous?

It KILLS There is NO CURE and

- Infection with the virus is life-long. Once a person is infected, the HIV remains in the body. The risk of developing AIDS or other health problems increases the longer one has been infected with the virus.
- There is no known drug or treatment that rids the body of the virus. A vaccine to protect against the virus suitable for widespread use will probably not be available for at least five to 10 years.
- A person infected with the HIV may have no symptoms for years yet can still spread the virus to someone else. Thus the infection can spread silently through a population from people infected with the virus.





Who
can get
HIV/AIDS?

Anyone

male or female,

young or old,

from any country,

any religion,

can become infected with HIV.

AIDS and HIV infection are not

limited to certain
groups of people.

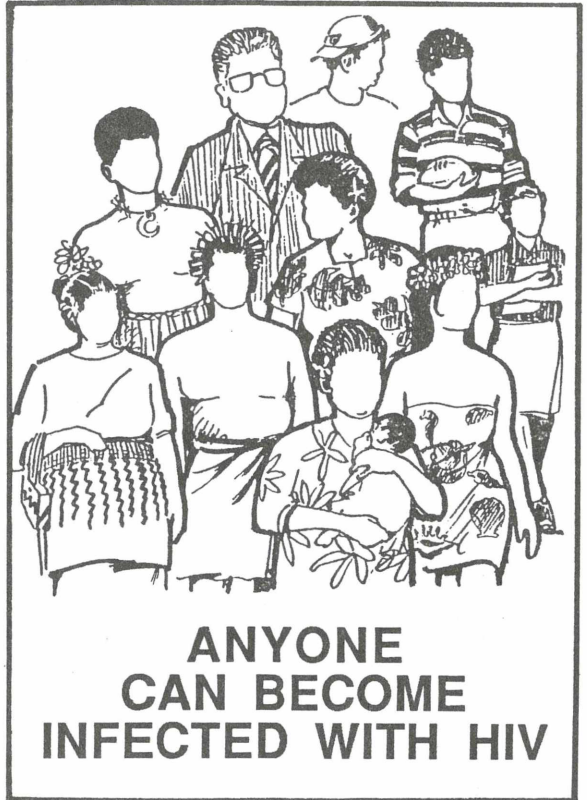
It is certain

Behaviours

and

Practices

by anyone which may
result in HIV infection
and AIDS.

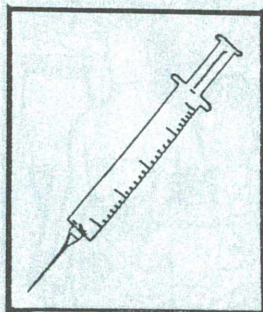


How is
HIV
spread?



HIV
transmitted
infected Blood
and Vaginal

It is transmitted in

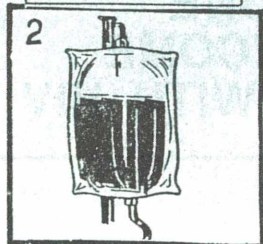


**infected
blood**

By sharing unclean needles and syringes contaminated with infected blood (particularly among intravenous drug users). Or through contaminated blood, or blood product, transfusions. (Donated blood is now tested for HIV throughout the Pacific.)

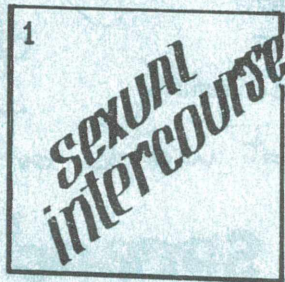


**infected
mother**





is
through
1, Semen,
fluids
3 ways



From an infected person to
his or her sexual partner
(man to woman, man to man,
woman to man, by vaginal,
anal and possibly oral sex.)

From infected mother to
child during pregnancy, at
birth, or shortly after birth.

REMEMBER: You can only become
infected with **HIV** if the blood semen
or vaginal fluid from an infected
person can get into your bloodstream.

How is HIV NOT spread?



HIV infection is not easy to get and is not spread by everyday contact, such as at work or at School.

It is NOT spread by

Toilet
Seats



Telephones



Sharing eating or
drinking
utensils.



HIV is spread through

It is NOT spread by

Hugging



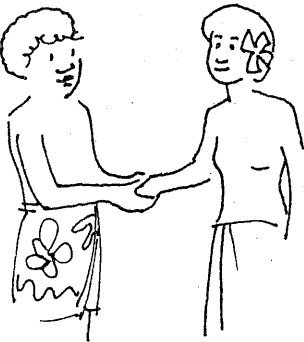
Kissing



Coughing and Sneezing.



Shaking hands



Insects



Swimming pools.



certain unsafe practices



How can we prevent HIV infection and AIDS?

HIV can be stopped, even though a vaccine is not yet available. Everyone can prevent its spread.

HIV is most frequently transmitted through sexual intercourse, and the sharing of needles and syringes used for intravenous drug use.

To keep from becoming infected, people must make very specific decisions.

Some people are not at risk of becoming infected with the HIV through sexual intercourse.

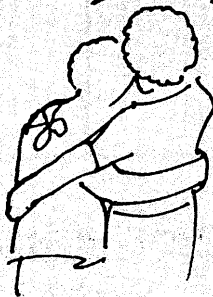
PEOPLE CHOOSING NOT TO HAVE SEX.

If you're not ready or if you don't feel it's right for your relationship say "NO!" the choice is yours - it shouldn't be based on pressure from peers or your companion.



PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT INFECTED AND WHO ONLY HAVE SEXUAL INTERCOURSE WITH ONE FAITHFUL PARTNER

My One And Only

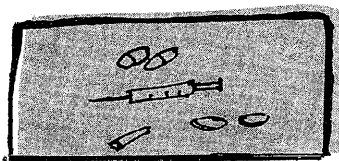
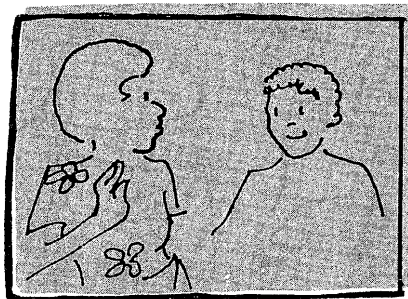


YOU CAN REDUCE YOUR CHANCES OF GETTING INFECTED WITH HIV BY



- always using a condom, everytime, from start to finish.

- reducing the number of sex partners you have.
- not having sex with people who have many sexual partners, or use intravenous drugs.



- never share needles and/or syringes or other skin piercing instruments (for example tatoo or ear piercing needles) unless they have been properly cleaned or sterilized.
- making sure any blood transfusions , you may need has been tested for HIV.

WE CAN ALL KEEP HIV INFECTION FROM SPREDING !



Because you know that the HIV is not spread through casual contact such as touching, talking with, eating with, or living with someone who has been infected with HIV or who has AIDS, you should understand that people infected should not be treated any differently than other persons.

People with AIDS or infected with HIV have the same needs to have human contact and friends as you or any other person does. They should not be shunned or ignored.

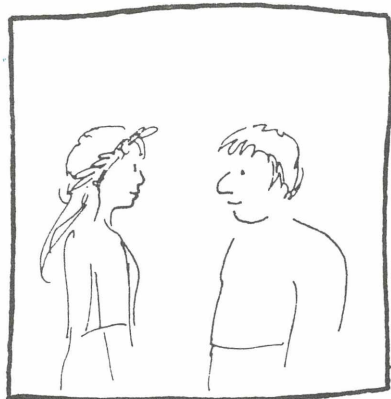
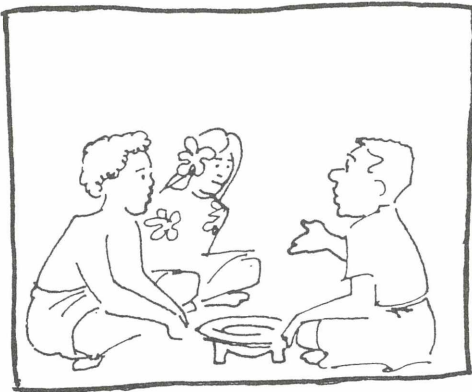
Think how you would feel if you were feeling well and all of your friends decided that they no longer wanted to speak with you or be around you. People with AIDS need support and sensitivity from friends and family members. There is no reason to be afraid of people with AIDS or HIV.



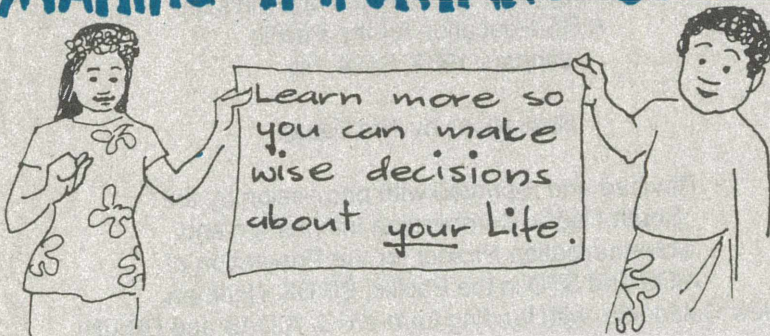
What can I do
to prevent
HIV and AIDS?

Inform and
educate people
about **AIDS**

Be
Sexually responsible



Sexual Responsibility involves
MAKING IMPORTANT CHOICES!



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Illustrations by Tim Dautei

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