



## HOW IS HIV TREATED?

There is no cure for HIV. Once infected, the virus stays in your body forever. Medications can be used to help control the virus and symptoms.

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is a medication that is taken daily that you can take to protect yourself from getting HIV before exposure to HIV.

Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) is a medication you can take to protect yourself from getting HIV after you have been exposed to HIV.



**For more information or for testing information, please call or visit your local community health centre.**

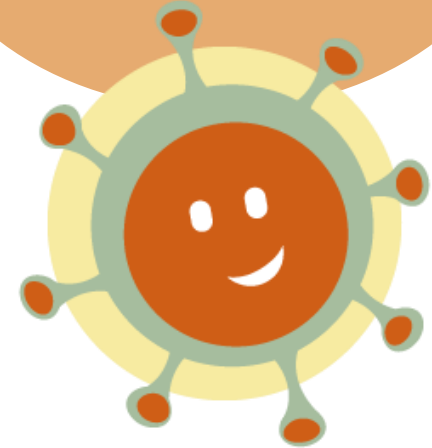
To contact STC:

 (306) 956-6100

 [www.sktc.sk.ca](http://www.sktc.sk.ca)

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# HIV



**SASKATOON TRIBAL COUNCIL  
(STC)**



## WHAT IS HIV?

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is a sexually transmitted blood borne infection (STBBI) caused by a virus that attacks the body's immune system.

The immune system is the part of the body that helps keep us healthy.

## HOW DO YOU GET HIV?

HIV can be spread by:

- Having **unprotected** vaginal or anal sex with someone who has HIV
- Non-sexual activities that put you in contact with someone else's blood (sharing needles)
- A pregnant person who has HIV, passing the infection to their baby during pregnancy, birth, or through breastfeeding

## SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF HIV

Many people do not have symptoms after being infected with HIV. Sometimes it can take years for symptoms to appear.

If left untreated, HIV can lead to AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) which can lead to death.

If symptoms do appear, they may include:

- Fever
- Headaches
- Chills
- Weight loss
- Not feeling hungry
- Sweating at night
- Feeling tired
- Rash
- Sore throat

Having these symptoms alone does not mean you have HIV. Other illnesses can cause the same symptoms.

**The only way to know if you have HIV is to get tested!**

## WHO IS AT RISK?

- Those who have unprotected sex with a person who has HIV.
- Those who have had a previous STBBI.
- Those who use intravenous (IV) or injection drugs.

## HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF?

- Do not have unprotected vaginal or anal sex.
- Always use new, sterile needles
- Always go to a professional for tattoos and piercings
- Reduce the number of sexual partners that you have.
- Get tested regularly.
- Make sure your partner gets tested.

## HOW DO I GET TESTED?

A blood test is needed to diagnose HIV. A nurse will put a small needle into a vein in your arm or hand to collect the blood sample.

**This can be done at your health centre by a nurse from STC!**