

# 1. HIV / AIDS

Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a disease of the human immune system caused by HIV (Human Immuno-deficiency Virus). In 2006, it was estimated that 2.5 million people are affected by HIV in India. It is found high among people who visit sex workers, multiple or un-known or un-reliable sex partners, men having sex with men, drug users and transgender. There is no cure to AIDS.

## Treatment & Prevention

The HIV infected person remains asymptomatic for the initial few years; it manifests by six to eight years. At this stage, medical treatment and psycho-social support is needed. Anti Retroviral Treatment (ART) can stop people becoming ill for many years and can keep the HIV in the body at low level. It has to be taken everyday for the rest of life. It is available at many community care centers. Remember, it is not cure. Hence we encourage all our blood donors to follow safe sex practices, be faithful to one partner, use latex condoms, avoid drug abuse and always insist for safe and reliable blood transfusion when in need.

## Transmission

HIV is transmitted by infected person through body fluids like blood, semen, vaginal fluid, preseminal fluid, and breast milk. Transmission can happen by sexual contacts (anal, vaginal or oral), unsafe blood / blood product transfusion, organ transplant, contaminated needles, mother to child during pregnancy, and breast feeding. HIV progressively reduces the effectiveness of the immune system of body and leaves the person susceptible to infections and tumors. HIV is not transmitted through everyday social contact.



प्रथमा