

A CONTAMINATED
NEEDLE CARRIES AN
EVEN GREATER RISK OF
INFECTION THAN UN-
PROTECTED SEXUAL
INTERCOURSE



For more information:

www.odccp.org
www.unaids.org



HIV/AIDS
and
Drug Abuse =
A devastating
combination



What is AIDS?

AIDS is an incurable disease caused by HIV. When HIV enters your body, it starts attacking your immune system which protects your body against diseases. Over the years, as HIV slowly weakens your immune system, you develop first minor illnesses, then serious and ultimately life-threatening diseases such as tuberculosis and pneumonia. This final stage of infection is called AIDS.



Do only homosexuals and injecting drug users get HIV?

No. Anyone can get infected with HIV. Anyone who has unprotected sex or shares needles is at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS.



How do you get HIV?

HIV spreads through unprotected sex (intercourse without a condom), infected blood transfusions, contaminated needles (most often used for injecting drugs) and from an infected mother to her child during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding.

Will you get HIV if you use drugs?

You run a greater risk of contracting HIV if you use drugs. Think about it: drugs alter your mind and affect your judgement, making it more difficult to say "no" and more likely that you forget to use a condom.

What does a person with HIV look like?

You cannot tell who has HIV. A person with HIV may or may not look sick. People infected with HIV can feel healthy for a long time and can carry the virus for months or years before they get sick. But all that time they can unknowingly infect others if they have unprotected sex or share needles.



to treat and relieve your infections, as well as psychological counselling and social support.



How do you know if you have HIV?

You can visit a doctor and be tested for HIV. The test will let you know if the virus is in your body.

How can you avoid contracting HIV?

Protect yourself with a condom, don't share needles and stay in control of your life - don't take drugs.

What can you do if you have HIV?

Talk to doctors and health workers about medical care and other help available in your community. Even if expensive new therapies are not available to delay the onset of AIDS, you should be able to get medicines