

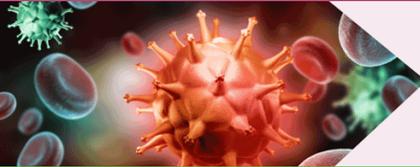
“Never let the things you cannot do prevent you from doing the things you can.” ~ Coach John Wooden



CHAP Weekly Update

October 2, 2020

Review of HIV



Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) causes problems by attacking the immune cell. It begins by entering the immune cell and making many copies of itself, completely taking over the cell and stopping it from doing its infection-fighting job. Once the cell is full of HIV copies, it bursts open, releasing more virus to infect more immune cells.

Why Does This Matter?

The fewer working infection-fighting cells there are, the less able the body is to fight infection. The immune cells most affected by HIV are Lymphocytes, particularly CD4 lymphocytes.

We determine severity of HIV infection by measuring:

- ❑ **Viral Load** (how much virus is in the blood)
A high viral load is bad
- ❑ **CD4** (how many lymphocytes are left to fight infection)
A CD4 count of less than 200 is bad



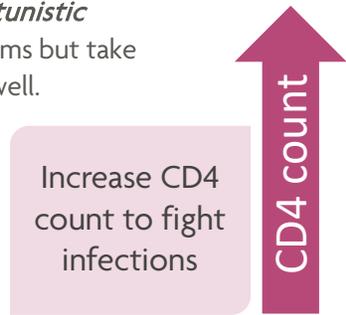
Why Treat?

Prevent Opportunistic Infections

When the CD4 count is low, people are at risk for *opportunistic infections*. These infections normally don't cause problems but take the opportunity when the immune system isn't working well.

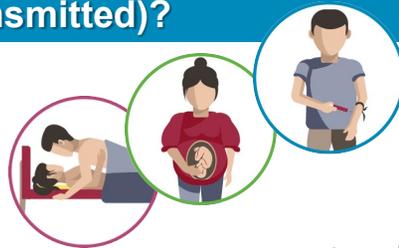
Examples:

- ❖ Skin problems: Kaposi's Sarcoma
- ❖ Lung problems: pneumocystis pneumonia, TB
- ❖ Mouth and throat problems: yeast infection that is painful and difficult to treat



How Is It Spread (Transmitted)?

Most HIV infections are spread through sexual contact. It can also spread from mother to baby during pregnancy or breastfeeding and by sharing needles to inject drugs.



Stop the Spread of HIV

A high viral load means there is lots of virus to pass on.

Most new infections of HIV come from people who don't know they have it OR from people who are not receiving adequate treatment. Treatment reduces viral load and stops transmission.



Save the Date

Next Session: October 6, 2020 We will start our monthly Diabetes talks. First one: Judy Thompson, PharmD, CDE will talk about Blood Glucose Monitoring



Thank you to Terri Bramel, PA-C and Lisa Rea, RN for their talk about HIV and COVID-19.



U = U

Undetectable viral load = Untransmissible virus.

This is why treatment is so important!



Continuing Education

AKCHAP.org



ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM

Let us know what you think! aka-CHAPCOVID-19weeklyupdates@anthc.org
Send questions for presenters and each other, and suggest topics for discussion.

"Drugs don't work in patients who don't take them."
-C. Everett Koop



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October 2, 2020

How Do We Know Treatment is Working?

We do lab tests.

Low viral load and high CD4 count means treatment is working.

- ❖ These lab tests require special tubes and have special transport requirements. Work with your THO and your region's lab to coordinate these tests.
- ❖ When setting up travel for someone with HIV, coordinate with the HIV clinic to possibly get labs done while they are in Anchorage.
- ❖ Tests may need to be done every 3-6 months.



More Facts About Treatment

- ❖ HIV treatment suppresses the virus, but does not kill it.
- ❖ Medicine must be taken everyday. **Always.**

Support patients by providing patient education; encourage continuation of treatment.

PrEP

Pre-exposure Prophylaxis: This medicine can prevent HIV.

Things you should know:

This is very effective therapy for people who are at high risk for HIV:

- ❖ A person whose sexual partner(s) have HIV
- ❖ Gay or bisexual males with more than one partner
- ❖ A person who has frequent STIs or STI testing
- ❖ A person who is injecting drugs with shared needles



Talk with your doctor if you think someone might benefit from PrEP. The medicine must be taken every day to be effective. Patients need follow up every 3 months.

Tony Webster Truvada for HIV PrEP – Gilead Blue Pills

COVID-19 and HIV: What You Need to Know

If someone with HIV is on effective therapy, their risk for serious complications with COVID-19 are the same as a person without HIV.

What Health Aides Can Do to Help



- ❑ Help patients get meds on time.
- ❑ Order refills as soon as eligible.
- ❑ Ask if they can receive 60 or 90 days of meds instead of 30, in case meds are delayed.
- ❑ Find out what support they need to take medicine every day.
- ❑ Vaccinate: Influenza, Pneumococcus, Shingles, even HPV. Talk with your doctor about what your patient needs.

Additional Help to Prevent and Treat HIV

- ❑ Test people for HIV: know your region's testing policy.
- ❑ Test often...
- People at risk for HIV are also at risk for other STIs. Having another STI also increases the risk of getting HIV.
- **STIs:** Testing and treating STIs early prevents permanent damage and stops the spread of disease. Test often and test more than just urine. Test anus and mouth. Offer patients self-collection if available.

Other Resources

<http://www.iknowmine.org>

Anyone is welcome to this informative website for rural Native youth. People can order condoms and request testing kits for STIs, but not yet HIV.



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