

Reduce Your Risk of Contracting AIDS

Editor's note: Our Tailgate Training Tip Sheets are [available in Spanish at www.gemplers.com](http://www.gemplers.com).

KEY POINTS:

- **Anyone can get AIDS and the HIV virus that causes AIDS.**
- **You CANNOT get AIDS by being around a person who has it, or by sharing restrooms, drinking fountains, phones, tools, machinery, or eating utensils.**

Note to trainer: *The potential spread of HIV/AIDS is a continuing concern to ag/hort employers, particularly those who employ workers who traditionally have had little access to health education and health care.*

Follow this script or use it to help guide you through a 10- to 15-minute tailgate training session for your ag/hort workers. You may photocopy this sheet for your employees' personal use. However, it may not be published or sold. Good sources of additional information on HIV/AIDS are your local public health department, migrant health clinic, CDC's National AIDS Hotline (800/342-2437 – English or 800/344-7432 – Spanish), and these Internet sources: www.cdc.gov/hiv, www.cdcpin.org, and www.aidsinfo.nih.gov Also see our Tailgate Training Tip Sheets entitled Preventing Sexually Transmitted Diseases and What to Do When a Co-worker Has AIDS.

What is AIDS?

- You have probably heard of AIDS, but may not know exactly what it is. AIDS is a fatal disease caused by a virus that makes a person's body unable to fight off infection and other diseases.
- The virus that causes AIDS is called HIV. While there are medical treatments today that can slow down the rate at which HIV weakens the body's ability to fight infection, there is no cure for AIDS.
- Anyone can get AIDS, including men, women, children, and even babies. Worldwide, the government estimates that some 40 million people are living with HIV infection or AIDS, and that nearly 14,000 new infections occur each day.



Anyone can get AIDS, including women – and even their children and babies.

How does HIV spread?

- There are a lot of misunderstandings about HIV and AIDS. The way HIV is passed from one person to another is through blood-to-blood or sexual contact. An infected pregnant woman can also pass HIV on to her baby during pregnancy, delivery, or breast-feeding.
- The most common ways people get HIV are by having sex without a condom – with an HIV-infected person; and by sharing a needle and syringe to inject drugs with someone who has HIV.
- HIV **cannot** be spread by working or being around someone who has HIV – even if you shake the person's hand or hug or kiss the person – or by sharing restrooms, drinking fountains, telephones, tools, machinery, or eating utensils.
- You also cannot get HIV just from being bitten by an insect or stung by a bee.



You cannot get HIV by shaking another person's hand.

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See our [full line of safety supplies](#), including respirators, eye and ear protection, coveralls, first aid and more.

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Precautions you can take

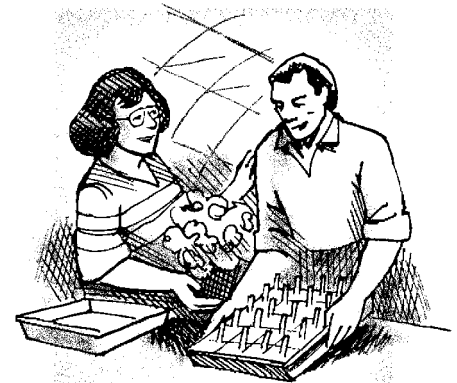
- Because AIDS is so widespread and cannot be cured, it's important that you take the following precautions to reduce your risk of contracting this disease:
1. Use a latex condom every time you have sex. If you are a woman having sex with a male partner, insist that he use one. If you are allergic to latex, talk to the pharmacist at your local drugstore or a health care professional about condoms made out of another material.
 2. Abstain from having sex with partners you don't know. The more sexual partners you have, the greater your risk of contracting AIDS.
 3. Take precautions to avoid coming into contact with another person's blood and other bodily fluids. For example, if you need to give first aid to a person who is injured on the job, place a barrier between your hand and the person's wound. The best barrier is to put on [latex](#), [nitrile](#) or [vinyl gloves](#). Then thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water.
 4. If blood is accidentally splashed on you, wash it off your skin with soap and water and rinse your eyes and mouth with water as soon as possible. If the blood enters your body through cuts or through your eyes or mouth, immediately contact a doctor or clinic.



Latex or plastic gloves will help protect you from exposure to an injured person's blood.

Where to get help

- It's important to know that persons with HIV may not have any symptoms for many years.
- Confidential blood tests are available at local clinics for persons to be tested for HIV. Counseling is also available in our community.
- Good places to find out where to get counseling, testing, or other information about HIV and AIDS include: our safety or human resources director; the local American Red Cross; county or local health departments; and doctors, nurses, or clinics.
- You can also call the Centers for Disease Control's National AIDS Hotline at one of these toll-free numbers: For English, call 1-800-342-2437; for Spanish, call 1-800-344-7432.



Persons with HIV may look healthy and not have any symptoms for years.

Are there any questions?

Note to trainer: Take time to answer trainees' questions. Then review the AIDS Prevention Do's and Don'ts.

AIDS PREVENTION DO'S AND DON'TS

DO:

- Know that anyone can get HIV and AIDS, including men, women, children, and even babies.
- Use personal protective equipment, such as gloves, when exposed to another person's blood.
- Seek confidential help from our safety or human resources director, or a doctor, nurse or other health care professional if you think you may have HIV or AIDS.

DON'T:

- Spread untrue rumors about AIDS, such as thinking that you can get it by working with a person who is HIV-infected.
- Have sex without the use of a condom.
- Forget to take precautions to avoid coming into contact with another person's blood if you need to administer first aid.

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