



**FREQUENTLY  
ASKED  
QUESTIONS:  
ABOUT  
HIV & AIDS**



**maisha!**

National AIDS Control Council

# HIV SITUATION AMONG ADOLESCENTS (AS OF 2016)

## HIV AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE (15-24 YEARS)

New HIV infections  
**24,187**

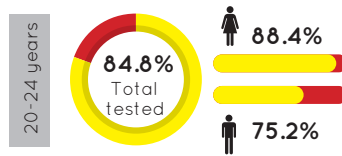
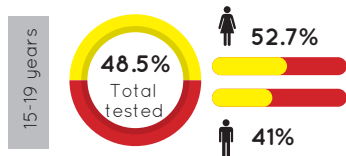
Living with HIV  
**238,987**

HIV related deaths  
**4,234**



▲ Young people (15-24 years) contribute to 46% of adult new HIV infections

## HIV TESTING AMONG ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE



**66** adolescents and young people get newly infected with HIV every day

**12** young people die every day from AIDS related causes

**#JIJUE JIPANGE.  
GET TESTED FOR  
HIV TODAY!**

Adolescents and Young people constitute **15%** of People Living with HIV

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What is HIV?

**HIV stands for:** Human Immunodeficiency Virus

This is the virus that causes AIDS. The virus attacks the body's immune system, and makes it hard for the body to fight off diseases and infections. Treatment is available and recommended for everyone with HIV. With early diagnosis and effective antiretroviral treatment, people with HIV can live a normal, healthy life.

### What is AIDS?

**AIDS stands for:** Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. If HIV is left untreated, the HIV virus will severely damage the immune system

### What are the signs & symptoms of HIV infection that one can notice without going for a test?

The symptoms of HIV vary, depending on the individual and what stage of the disease you are in: the early stage, the clinical latency stage, or AIDS (the late stage of HIV infection). Some people may experience a flu-like illness within 2-4 weeks after HIV infection. But some people may not feel sick during this stage. Flu-like symptoms can include: Fever, Chills, Rash, Night sweats, Muscle aches, Sore throat, Fatigue, Swollen lymph nodes, Mouth ulcers. Ministry of Health advises that one goes for HIV test in order to ascertain his/her HIV status.

### What is the window period for an HIV test?

The window period is time between potential exposure to HIV infection and the point when



Maisha County League delegation at State House, Nairobi. H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta is committed to champion the fight against Stigma among young people in the country which is the biggest hindrance to the uptake of HTC services © NACC

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

the test will give an accurate result. During the window period a person can be infected with HIV and be very infectious but still test HIV negative. The window period for antigen/ antibody test is four weeks. At this time the HIV infection will be detected.

### I am afraid to take HIV test what can I do?

It is normal to get anxious about receiving HIV test results. It takes a few minutes to get the

results. It's also the only way to know for sure whether or not you have been infected. It's better to know: It's normal to feel worried about HIV. But why let yourself fear the unknown? Testing early for HIV can help put your mind at ease and reduce the anxiety of not knowing. Whether your result is negative, or positive, it's always better to know so that you can move on with your life, or start treatment if necessary. And remember, your result may not be what you expect.

### How HIV is transmitted?

**HIV is present in blood, semen, vaginal secretions, breastmilk and other body fluids.**

① \_\_\_\_\_

Unprotected sex(vaginal, oral, anal) with a HIV infected person

② \_\_\_\_\_

Injection or transfusion of contaminated blood, blood products, semen (AI), skin grafts, or organ transplants from an infected individual.

③ \_\_\_\_\_

Vertical transmission (pregnancy, labor and delivery, breastfeeding)

④ \_\_\_\_\_

Occupational exposure (through needle stick injuries, splashing etc.)

⑤ \_\_\_\_\_

Sharing drug injection equipment, such as needles and syringes, without disinfecting them.

⑥ \_\_\_\_\_

Sharing of instruments for circumcision, scarification, injections, shaving, or tattoos without thoroughly disinfecting them.

### What is defilement?

An act which causes penetration of a child's genital organs (child is any one below the age of 18 years).

### What is rape?

An act done which causes penetration of one person's genital organs with the genital organs of another without their permission or where the permission is obtained by force, threats or intimidation of any kind

### If one is defiled or raped, what should they do?

- Go to a safe place.
- It is best to report the crime, notify the police immediately. Reporting the crime can help you regain a sense of personal power and control.
- Call a friend, a family member, or someone else you trust who can be with you and give you support.
- Preserve all physical evidence of the assault. Do not shower, bathe, douche, eat, drink, wash your hands, or brush your teeth until after you have had a medical examination. Save all of the clothing you were wearing at the time of the assault.

Place each item of clothing in a separate paper bag. Do not use plastic bags. Do not clean or disturb anything in the area where the assault occurred.

- Get medical care as soon as possible (ideally within 2 hours but not later than 72 hours). Go to a hospital emergency department or a specialized forensic clinic that provides treatment for sexual assault victims. Even if you think that you do not have any physical injuries, you should still have a medical examination and discuss with a health care



Young people pose for a photo with H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta. They will participate in Maisha County League, a campaign that strives to end HIV stigma and link young people to stigma free HIV testing, treatment and care

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

provider the risk of exposure to sexually transmitted infections and the possibility of pregnancy resulting from the sexual assault. Having a medical exam is also a way for you to preserve physical evidence of a sexual assault.

- If you suspect that you may have been given a “rape drug,” ask the hospital or clinic where you receive medical care to take a urine sample. Write down as much as you can remember about the circumstances of the assault, including a description of the assailant.
- Get information whenever you have questions or concerns. After a sexual assault, you have a lot of choices and decisions to make - e.g., about getting medical care, making a police report, and telling

other people. You may have concerns about the impact of the assault and the reactions of friends and family members.

- Talk with a counselor who is trained to assist rape victims. Counseling can help you learn how to cope with the emotional and physical impacts of the assault.

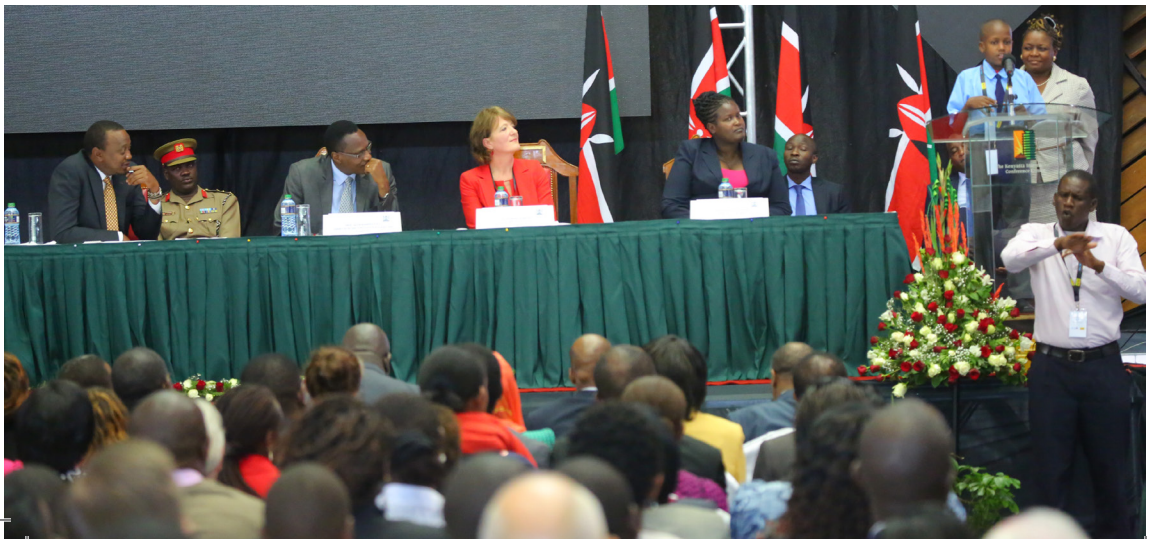
## COMMON MYTHS ABOUT HIV TRANSMISSION

### You cannot get HIV from

- Hugging.
- Shaking or holding hands.
- Mosquito bites, flies, insects

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Elijah Lemayan shares his story on living with HIV during the launch of the All In Campaign at KICC Nairobi. © NACC



- Kissing, unless there are open sores and wounds in or on the mouth.
- Sharing of a pit latrine or toilet with People Living with HIV
- Sharing food, drinks, or cooking tools.
- Dancing or swimming.
- Coughing or breathing.
- Living together.

### **How can adolescents and young people prevent getting infected by HIV?**

- Abstaining from all types of sexual intercourse/activity
- Delaying early sexual debut
- Do not touch body fluids directly. If you need to be in contact with blood, urine, semen, vaginal fluids, or feces, wear gloves or plastic bags over your hands or other exposed body parts.
- Burn or bury all infected waste and non-reusable objects with infected waste on them.
- Do not share used blades, needles, tattoo equipment, razors, and any other body piercing tools
- All pregnant girls and women must attend Antenatal clinic, get a HIV test and deliver their babies in the hospital to prevent transmission of HIV to their child

### **Where can I access HIV testing services?**

- Free HIV testing services can be accessed at any government health facility or health center
- Adolescents and young people aged 15 years and above can make an informed choice and give permission to receive HIV testing and counselling services
- Adolescents 15 years and below require care giver/ parental permission unless if they are pregnant, married or sexually active
- Your test results will be provided and appropriate post-test counselling conducted.

## **WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF DISCLOSING ONES HIV STATUS?**

### **Why is it important to disclose HIV status?**

The only way we can get support around living with HIV is by talking about it with somebody else. Many people are scared of taking this step because of stigma attached to HIV. However, there are various benefits of disclosing to



somebody:

- Support at the time of testing or diagnosis and in the future.
- A sense of closeness with those who can support us.
- Reduced risk of HIV transmission to others.
- Relieving the stress of keeping HIV a secret.
- Ensuring you get the most appropriate care and treatment from our healthcare providers.
- Disclosure can feel empowering and lessen stigma.

### What is confidentiality of HIV Status?

- Your medical status is not to be shared without your permission
- Confidentiality means not discussing somebody's personal information with anyone else without consent. This means that under no circumstances is anyone allowed to disclose your HIV status without your consent. Legal action can be taken against people who reveal your HIV status without your permission

### Is there a cure for HIV?

There's no cure for HIV but there is effective treatment

### What is ARV?

Antiretroviral medications – These are the medications used to treat HIV. They are powerful, lifesaving drugs that prevent HIV from multiplying in the body of those who are HIV positive.

### What is ART?

**Antiretroviral therapy.** Powerful, lifesaving drugs that prevent HIV from multiplying in the body of those who are HIV positive. ART sometimes refers to the all treatment of HIV and AIDS including medications, doctor's appointments, counselling sessions and more.

### Who should take ARVs medication?

All those who test positive for the HIV virus and are advised to do so by their health care provider

### How should I take the ARV drugs?

ARV drugs should be taken in the correct dose of medicine, at the correct time every day without fail. Adherence in taking of ARVs is very important if they are to be effective

### What are the benefits of taking ARVs?

- Decreases viral load (the amount of HIV virus in the blood)
- Increases CD4 count (cells that protect our bodies from infection)  
Improves overall health
- Reduces chances of transmitting HIV  
Reduces a person's chances of getting opportunistic infections.
- Reduces the risk of HIV transmission from mother to child.

### What happens if I miss taking my ARV drugs?

- Talk to your health care provider in case you have difficulty taking your medication.

- If you miss your ARVs more than once in a month the HIV virus becomes stronger and gets resistant to the medication.

## STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION AGAINST A PERSON LIVING WITH HIV AND AIDS

### What is Stigma?

Stigma is a negative attitude toward people who have characteristics that make them different from what people think is right or normal. Most people who are living with HIV end up being stigmatized, regardless of the behaviors in which they may have engaged.

### What is discrimination?

Discrimination describes the actual ways that people are treated worse than others because they are stigmatized and/or different. Discrimination against people living with HIV means that they are treated unfairly/badly or do not have certain rights because they are HIV+.

### Stigma leads to people refusing to test for HIV because of;

- Fear of finding out their HIV status
- Fear of being judged negatively by others
- Fear of losing friends in case one is found HIV positive

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta accepts to be an Anti HIV Stigma Champion when the Maisha County League delegation paid him a courtesy call at State House, Nairobi © NACC

### Remember:

- Respect and keep confidential, information regarding people living with and affected by HIV.
- Do not blame or accuse children about the behaviours of their parents or relatives. Children, especially children affected by HIV and AIDS are not responsible for any behaviour of their parents or relatives.
- Schools should not force children affected by HIV to be excluded from studying with other children.
- Adolescents Living with HIV (ALHIV) are much more than their HIV status, they deserve to live full healthy lives and have dreams and aspirations for their future
- There is life even after testing positive for HIV
- With adherence to correct treatment, ALHIV can lead normal lives
- A child living with HIV cannot transmit the virus to other children through normal school and social activities
- Children living with HIV have a right not to be discriminated and stigmatized



Adolescents and Young People attend a HIV Meeting at Hilton Hotel, Nairobi © NACC

**CALL TO ACTION**  
**#JIJUE JIPANGE.**  
**GET TESTED FOR**  
**HIV TODAY!**





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