

HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (HIV) INFECTION/AIDS

Reportable to local or state health department

**This fact sheet is for provider information only.
If you have questions, please call the health department.**

The spread of HIV, the virus that causes Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS), has not been documented in the childcare setting or schools. Since children infected with this virus may be in childcare or school, this information is provided to further reduce the extremely unlikely possibility of spread.

CAUSE	Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).
SYMPTOMS	HIV commonly attacks the immune system, leaving people susceptible to a variety of infections. Symptoms will depend on the type of infection. Children may experience no symptoms, or they may have symptoms such as diarrhea, fever, weight loss, or failure to thrive.
SPREAD	<p>It may be possible, but unlikely, in the childcare or school setting, for spread to occur by getting blood from an infected person into open cuts, scrapes, or the mouth or eyes of another person. Most children who are infected get the virus from their infected mothers during pregnancy or at the time of birth. Some children have been infected through transfusions of blood products that contained HIV. In adults, the virus is most often spread through sexual contact or by sharing needles.</p> <p>HIV has been found in blood, semen, vaginal fluids, saliva, urine, tears, breast milk, and other body fluids, but spread has NOT been shown to occur from contact with fluids other than blood, semen, vaginal fluids, and breast milk.</p> <p>HIV is NOT spread by coughing, sneezing, hugging, mosquito bites, or contact with eating utensils, faucets, doorknobs, or toilet seats.</p>
INCUBATION	It may take from 3 to 6 months (rarely, longer than a year) for HIV antibodies to appear. The incubation period may be found to be longer as we gain more experience with the treatment and management of the disease.
CONTAGIOUS PERIOD	Probably from the time of infection throughout the remainder of the person's life.
EXCLUSION	<p><u>Childcare</u>: If a child with HIV infection has unusually aggressive behavior (e.g., biting) that cannot be controlled, oozing sores that cannot be covered, or bleeding problems.</p> <p><u>School</u>: None.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children who are infected with HIV may have weakened immune systems. This would make them more likely to have serious problems from infections such as chickenpox, measles, CMV, or TB. Parents/guardians of infected children should call their healthcare provider if these illnesses occur in the childcare or school.

EXCLUSION (CONTINUED)

- **Adults infected** with HIV may work in the childcare setting if they do not have any medical conditions which would allow their body fluids to come into contact with others. HIV-infected childcare workers should call their healthcare provider if diseases like chickenpox, measles, CMV, or TB occur.

DIAGNOSIS Recommend parents/guardians call their healthcare provider. HIV infection is diagnosed by a blood test.

PREVENTION/CONTROL

- There is no indication for routine screening of children for HIV antibody status before they enter childcare or school. The child's healthcare provider and family are responsible for determining whether the child is at risk and should be tested.
- Children and staff should not share toothbrushes or nail clippers.
- Clean and disinfect blood and body fluid spills: (See pg 35.)
 - Clean all surfaces and objects contaminated with blood or body fluids with soap or a detergent and water, and then disinfect immediately with an effective disinfectant. HIV, as well as other infectious germs, may be found in blood and other body fluids of any person even when there are no symptoms to suggest infection is present.
 - Wear disposable medical gloves when handling blood (nosebleeds, cuts) or items, surfaces, or clothing contaminated with blood or bloody body fluids or when there are open sores, cuts, or abrasions on the hands.
 - Wash hands immediately after contact with any body fluids, even if gloves have been worn. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water. **Thorough handwashing is the best way to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.**

For more information, call MDH at (651) 201-5414, your local health department, or the Minnesota AIDS Project hotline at (612) 373-AIDS (Twin Cities) or (800) 248-AIDS (statewide).