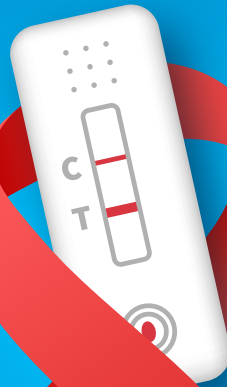


1ST DECEMBER 2025



WORLD AIDS DAY



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WORLD AIDS DAY

World AIDS Day 1st December 2025 “Overcoming disruption, transforming the AIDS response”.

Today is World AIDS Day, and every year on December 1st, we bring to light a disease that is affecting people all around the world. HIV remains a major global public health issue according to the World Health Organization with an estimated 40.8 million people living with HIV at the end of 2024 and an estimated 630,000 lives lost. Awareness, education, and testing are crucial to limit and prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS in our communities. We encourage everyone to learn about HIV/AIDS and the risks of transmission and seek access to testing. Accessing testing not only ensures those who test positive access treatment, but it also reduces transmission to others due to knowing their status. While there is no cure for HIV infection with diagnosis and treatment it is a manageable chronic health condition. Those with HIV can live long and healthy lives with access to treatment.

At the Sir Brian Bell Foundation, we are proud to do our part every year to bring free health information on HIV/AIDS to communities while at the Sir Brian Bell Centre for Transfusion Medicine we also ensure that every potential blood donor is provided a free mini health check every time they donate blood which includes screen for various STDs as well as checking your weight, blood pressure and haemoglobin level. “It’s simple, regular testing saves lives. Many people don’t test due to stigma and shame; there is no shame in an HIV diagnosis. It is our hope that people come forward for testing and seek the treatment they deserve,” commented Sir Brian Bell Foundation CEO Bronwyn Wright.

This World AIDS Day, know your status, get tested, and get treated. Help is available.

UN AIDS

The theme of this year’s World AIDS Day is “Overcoming disruption, transforming the AIDS response.” The commemoration of World AIDS Day, which will take place on 1 December 2025, is an important opportunity to highlight the impact that the funding cuts from international donors have had on the response to AIDS as well as to showcase the resilience of countries and communities stepping up to protect the gains made and drive the HIV response forward. The global AIDS response has been upended in recent months but there is still much more to be done to achieve the SDG target of ending AIDS by 2030. AIDS is not over and given today’s environment, a new transformative approach is needed to mitigate risks and help us reach our targets. Countries must make radical shifts to HIV programming and funding. The global HIV response cannot rely on domestic resources alone. The international community must come together to bridge the financing gap, support countries to close the remaining gaps in HIV prevention

and treatment services, remove legal and social barriers, and empower communities to lead the way forward. Transformative solutions are needed to improve access to HIV services, eliminate stigma and discrimination once and for all, and ensure the protection of rights for women, girls who continue to face disproportionate barriers in accessing healthcare.

Learn more: <https://www.unaids.org/en/2025-world-aids-day>

What is HIV/AIDS?

Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a virus that attacks the immune system the body’s natural defence against illness. A person infected with HIV is described as ‘HIV positive,’ meaning that they receive a ‘positive’ result from a blood test for HIV infection; it does not mean they have AIDS. The most advanced stage of HIV infection is acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), which can take many years to develop depending on the individual if not treated. AIDS is defined as the development of certain cancers, infections, or other severe long-term clinical manifestations. According to World Health Organization there were an estimated 40.8 million people living with HIV at the end of 2024 with an estimated 630 000 people dying from HIV-related causes and an estimated 1.3 million people acquired HIV. With increasing access to effective HIV prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and care HIV infection has become a manageable chronic health condition which means those who have been diagnosed with HIV can lead long and healthy lives.

How is HIV transmitted?

HIV can be transmitted via the exchange of a variety of body fluids from infected individuals, such as blood, breast milk, semen, and vaginal secretions. Engaging in high-risk activities only once can cause you to become infected, which is why it is important to always practice safe sex to reduce your risk of infection. The presence of other sexually transmitted infections also increases the risk of HIV transmission which is why regular testing and consistent condom use are crucial. Other modes of HIV transmission are also possible including sharing contaminated needles, syringes and other injecting equipment and drug solutions when injecting drugs as well as receiving unsafe injections, blood transfusions, tissue transplantation, medical procedures that involve unsterile cutting or piercing, and experiencing accidental needle stick injuries among health workers. HIV can be transmitted from an HIV-positive woman to her child during pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding; however, antiretroviral treatment (ART) and other interventions can reduce this risk. Individuals cannot become infected through ordinary day-to-day contact such as kissing, hugging, shaking hands, or sharing personal objects, food, or water.

The Sir Brian Bell Foundation is proud to support health and education initiatives in Papua New Guinea. Stay up to date with all the latest news from the Foundation and the programs and individuals it supports via our Facebook page:

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TB and HIV

TB is the most common illness among people living with HIV. In 2022, an estimated 167,000 people living with HIV died from TB, representing 27% of all HIV-related deaths according to World Health Organization, these deaths can be prevented with access to testing and care. World Health Organization advises screening should be offered routinely at HIV care services, and routine HIV testing should be provided to those diagnosed with TB. We will be posting more useful health information tomorrow. To view or download our World AIDS Day health information brochure visit our website: www.sirbrianbellfoundation.org.pg

Stages and Symptoms of HIV and AIDS

The symptoms of HIV vary depending on what stage of the disease you are in and the individual. If you think you may have been exposed to HIV, it is important to get tested by a medical health professional. Know your status.

Acute HIV infection: Within 2 to 4 weeks after infection, many people experience flu-like symptoms, while others may not experience symptoms at all. Symptoms can include fever, chills, rash, night sweats, muscle aches, sore throat, fatigue, swollen lymph nodes, and mouth ulcers. These symptoms can last anywhere from a few days to several weeks, and the infection may not show up on some HIV tests. Infected individuals are still highly infectious during this time and can spread the infection to others. If you think you may have been exposed to HIV, get tested.

Clinical latency stage: also called chronic HIV infection, this stage, the virus still multiplies, but at very low levels and symptoms may not be experienced, but the virus can be transmitted to others. Without HIV treatment, people can stay in this stage for 10 or more years, but some move through this stage faster. Taking medications each day as prescribed to keep a low viral load can protect your health and lower the risk of transmitting the virus to others and with treatment, people can live in this stage for decades.

AIDS: If you are HIV positive and are not on ART, your body's immune system will eventually weaken and progress to AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome), the late stage of HIV infection. Symptoms during this stage can include rapid weight loss, recurring fever or profuse night sweats, extreme and unexplained fatigue, swelling of the lymph glands in the armpits, groin, or neck, diarrhoea that lasts for more than a week, sores of the mouth, anus, or genitals, pneumonia, red, brown, pink, or purplish blotches on or under the skin or inside the mouth, nose, or eyelids, memory loss, depression, and other neurologic disorders.

HIV Testing, Diagnosis and Treatment

It is important to know your HIV status before engaging in any sexual activity ensure any sexual partners do the same. There were an estimated 40.8 million people living with HIV at the end of 2024 with transmissions still occurring globally. Blood tests are the most common way to diagnose HIV, the test looks for antibodies to the virus that the body creates to fight the virus, although it can take the body anywhere from six weeks to a year to develop antibodies to the virus. Talk to your doctor about getting a blood test and remember to wait for your test results before engaging in any sexual activities as your test results will only be current from the day you were tested. There is no cure for HIV however it can be treated with antiretroviral therapy (ART) which consists of one or more medicines which reduces its replication in the blood, thereby reducing the viral load to an undetectable level which allows HIV-positive people to live longer, healthier, and productive lives.

HIV Prevention.

There is currently no vaccine for HIV; everyone has a mutual responsibility to protect each other from HIV; it is important to always:

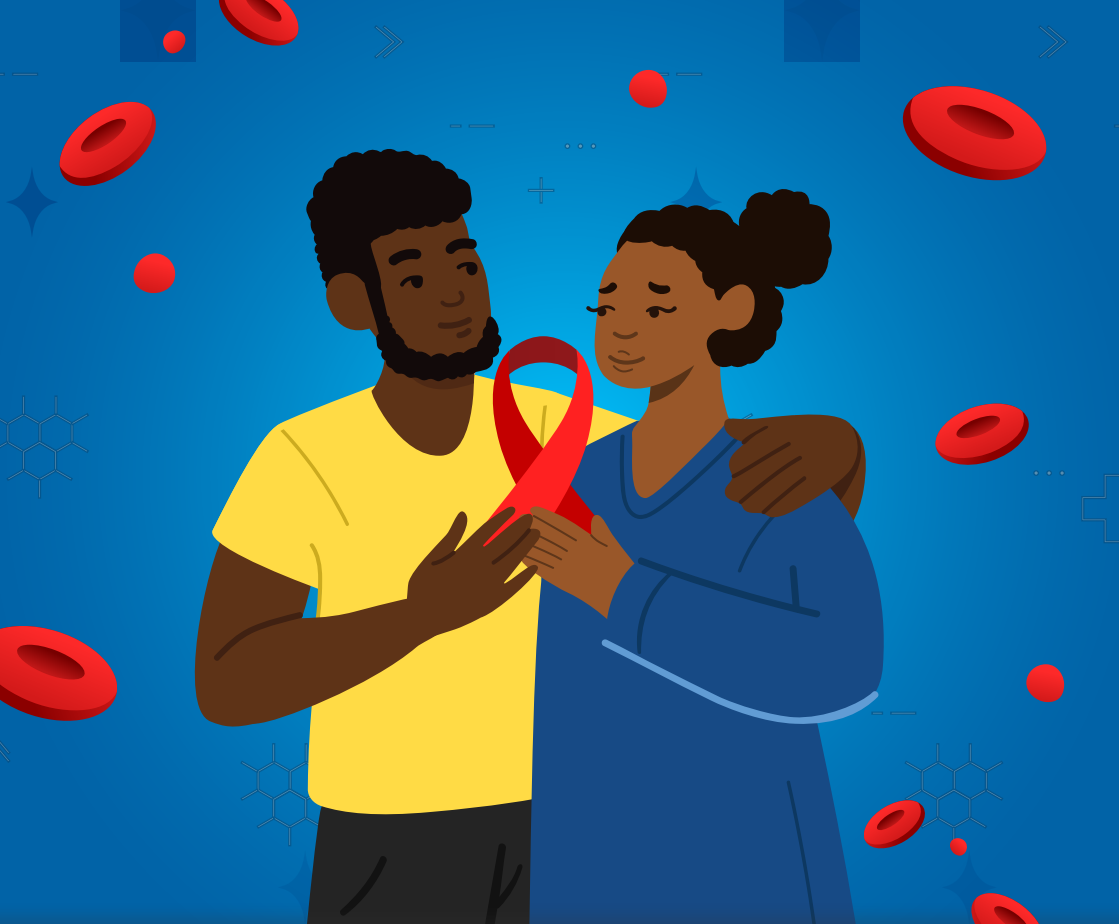
Practice Safe Sex: Always use a condom for all sexual activities to reduce your risk of HIV and any STDs to stop passing fluids from one partner to another. Evidence shows from USAID shows that male latex condoms are 90% protective effect against HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) when used correctly and consistently. Have condoms readily available and make sure you know how to use them correctly, remembering to only use one condom at a time.

Be Monogamous: Two people who have sex only with one another don't have an opportunity to bring a new STD into the relationship. If you and your partner have been tested and are healthy, remaining faithful to each other is a very good way to reduce your chances of contracting an STD or HIV.

Only Use Safe Injecting Equipment: People who inject drugs can take precautions against becoming infected with HIV by using sterile injecting equipment (new needles and syringes for each injection) and never sharing equipment and drug solutions.

Never Drink or Use Drugs: When impaired with drugs or alcohol, your judgement may be impaired and increase the risk of getting HIV.

Get Tested Regularly: even if you are in a monogamous relationship, it is important to get tested and encourage your partner to do the same. Make sure you know your HIV status and remember to get re-tested any time you think you may have been exposed to HIV.



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