

AIDS (Adapted from Wikipedia)

Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is a disease of the human immune system caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

This condition progressively reduces the effectiveness of the immune system and leaves individuals susceptible to infections and tumors. HIV is transmitted through direct contact of a mucous membrane or the bloodstream with a bodily fluid containing HIV, such as blood, semen, vaginal fluid, preseminal fluid and breast milk.

This transmission can involve anal, vaginal or oral sex, blood transfusion, contaminated needles, exchange between mother and baby during pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding or other exposure to one of the above bodily fluids.

AIDS is now a pandemic. In 2007, it was estimated that 33.2 million people lived with the disease worldwide and that AIDS killed 2.1 million people, including 330,000 children. Over three-quarters of these deaths occurred in sub-Saharan Africa. Due to the difficulty in treating HIV infection, the most important are prevention, safe sex and needle-exchange programmes. There is currently no vaccine or cure.

Tasks to the text:

Read the text

Explain the terms AIDS, HIV

How is AIDS transmitted?

What is the key aim in controlling AIDS?