



## **DECEMBER 1 WORLD AIDS DAY**

### **KNOW YOUR STATUS**

#### **HIV/AIDS**

- The Human Immunodeficiency Virus(HIV)targets the immune system, and weakens people's defence systems against infection and some forms of cancer
- As the HIV virus destroys and impairs the function of immune cells, those infected gradually become immunodeficient. Immune function is measured by CD4 count
- The most advanced stage of HIV infection is Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) which can take 2-15 years to develop dependent upon the individual

#### **Signs and Symptoms**

- Varies depending upon the stage of infection
- Initial symptoms could be flu-like symptoms or none at all
- As the infection progressively weakens the immune system, the infected individual may experience symptoms such as weight loss, fever, coughs and diarrhoea
- Without treatment they could develop TB, severe bacterial infections, and certain cancers

#### **Transmission**

- HIV can be transmitted via an exchange of a variety of body fluids from infected individuals. These include breast milk, blood, and having unprotected sex
- It is critical to note that individuals CANNOT become infected through ordinary day-to-day contact such as kissing, hugging, shaking hands, or sharing personal objects such as food or water

## Risk factors

- Having unprotected sex
- Having another sexually transmitted disease
- Sharing infected needles, syringes and other injecting equipment
- Accidental needle stick injuries
- Receiving unsafe injections, blood transfusions, tissue transplantation, and other procedures involving unsterile cutting or piercing

## Testing

- South Africa has made impressive strides in recent years in getting more people to test for HIV
- Women are more receptive to testing than men
- The rates of testing are higher in urban areas than rural areas
- Everyone between the ages of 13 & 64 should be tested for HIV at least once as part of their routine health check, and people with certain risk factors should get tested more often
- HIV is tested using an antigen/antibody test which looks for both HIV antigens and antibodies  
A rapid antibody test gives a positive result based on antibodies to HIV not the virus itself. It takes your body up to 3 months to produce these antibodies at levels that can be detected by this test
- South Africa will also be rolling out self-testing, and initial studies have shown that 88% of those that refused traditional medical testing, were happy to self- test

## Education

- The government has committed itself to providing comprehensive HIV/AIDS education programmes to 50% of schools in high burden areas
- Barriers to providing sex education in schools relates to high drop-out rates, a shortage of teacher training and a reluctance on the part of schools due to the sensitivity of the subject
- Civil societies and businesses also play an important role in the education on HIV/AIDS

## Aids in South Africa (2017 stats)

- 7.2 m people living with HIV
- 18.8% adult HIV prevalence ( ages 15 – 49)
- 270 000 new HIV infections
- 110 000 AIDS-related deaths

AN AUTHORISED FINANCIAL SERVICES PROVIDER FSP LICENCE NO.12239

---

- 61% adults on antiretroviral treatment
- 58% children on antiretroviral treatment
- SA has the largest antiretroviral programme in the world and is making good progress towards UNAIDS 90-90-90 strategy  
The aim of the strategy is for 90% of all HIV positive people to know their HIV status, for 90% of those people who know their status to be on antiretroviral treatment, and for 90% of those on antiretroviral treatment to have suppressed viral loads by 2020
- As reported in July 2018 the stats on the 90-90-90 strategy is as follows:
  - 85% of people aged 15-64 who live with HIV know their status
  - 71% of those who know their status are on antiretroviral treatment
  - 85% of people aged 15-64 who are on antiretroviral treatment have suppressed viral loads

#### **HIV and Tuberculosis (TB) in South Africa**

- TB is the leading cause of death in South Africa, and SA has the world's 6<sup>th</sup> largest TB epidemic
- HIV fuels the TB epidemic as people living with HIV are at a far higher risk of developing TB due to weakened immune systems
- It is estimated that 60% of people living with HIV in South Africa are also co-infected with TB
- Nelson Mandela at the HIV/TB Global Leaders Forum ( 2008) said that we cannot fight AIDS unless we fight TB

**KNOW YOUR STATUS**