

HIV

What is HIV?

HIV stands for **H**uman **I**mmunodeficiency **V**irus. This is the virus that causes AIDS. HIV is unique from most viruses because it attacks your immune system. The immune system gives our bodies the ability to fight infections. HIV finds and destroys a type of white blood cell in our bodies that our immune system must have to fight disease.

Today, more people than ever before are living with HIV/AIDS. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that about 1 million people in the United States are living with HIV or AIDS. About one quarter of these people do not know that they are infected, which in turn, puts them and others at risk.

What are symptoms of HIV?

You should not rely alone on the symptoms of HIV because symptoms may not appear until many years after you have been exposed. An individual can in fact appear healthy, and feel healthy, but actually be infected with the HIV virus. If you feel that you may have been exposed to HIV...**GET TESTED.** Testing for HIV is the only way to find out if you are infected.