# HIV/AIDS

* In the United States, there were 30,635 people who were given an HIV diagnosis in the year 2020. The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) attacks the immune system, which reduces people's defenses against a variety of illnesses as well as certain types of cancer. People with robust immune systems are better able to ward off infections and cancers. People who are infected with the virus eventually develop an immune deficiency because the virus kills immune cells and interferes with their ability to function. AIDS, also known as acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, is the most severe stage of HIV infection. It might take many years for AIDS to develop in an untreated individual, depending on the person's circumstances. The development of certain malignancies, infections, or other serious long-term clinical symptoms are what distinguish AIDS patients as having the disease.
* In terms of new HIV infections in 2015, Tennessee ranked number sixteen out of all 50 states. In the year 2020, in the state of Tennessee, there were 18,207 HIV positive individuals. Also during this time, there were 647 people who were diagnosed with HIV for the first time. As of 2022, 14% of HIV-positive individuals living in the state of Tennessee are unaware of the fact that they have the virus, which implies that they are not receiving the necessary HIV treatment. Nashville CARES, which was established in 1985, is currently the most prominent HIV/AIDS support organization in the state of Tennessee. Nashville CARES assist over 50,000 people annually across the state of Tennessee and provide complete services to customers in 17 counties around Middle Tennessee. Individuals who are at risk for or are currently living with HIV are eligible to receive specialized education, HIV testing that is both free and confidential, as well as a wide range of other comprehensive services from the organization.
* HIV infection can cause a wide range of symptoms that change as the disease progresses. Although HIV-positive patients are most likely to spread the virus in the early stages of infection, many aren't aware of their status until much later. In the weeks following initial infection, some individuals may show no symptoms while others may exhibit flu-like symptoms such as fever, headache, rash, and sore throat. Other symptoms, like lymph node swelling, weight loss, fever, diarrhea, and cough, can appear as the infection gradually affects the immune system. Illnesses as serious as tuberculosis (TB), cryptococcal meningitis, and other bacterial infections, as well as malignancies including lymphomas and Kaposi's sarcoma, are possible if they do not receive treatment. Contaminated blood, breast milk, sperm, and genital secretions are all possible routes of transmission for HIV. Pregnancy and birth are both vulnerable times for the spread of HIV from mother to child. Normal, everyday interactions like kissing, embracing, and shaking hands, as well as the sharing of personal items, food, and water, do not put people at risk of infection. The virus that causes HIV currently has no treatment or cure. When a person is diagnosed with HIV, they will always carry the virus in their body. HIV can, however, be managed and kept under control with the right medicine and medical care. People who have been diagnosed with HIV have the potential to live long and healthy lives.

## Sources:

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