

HIV/Aids

grade 6
science

name _____

class _____ team _____

date _____ seat _____

What are HIV and Aids?

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HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus that attacks the immune system (the body's defense against infection). HIV uses healthy white blood cells to replicate itself, breaking down the immune system and leaving the body more susceptible to illness. Without treatment, most people infected with HIV become less able to fight off germs that we are exposed to every day. Someone who has HIV is called "HIV positive" or "HIV+".

AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is a late stage of HIV infection. An HIV positive person is diagnosed with AIDS when their immune system is so weakened that it is no longer able to fight off illness. People with immune deficiency are much more vulnerable to infections such as pneumonia and various forms of cancer. These diseases are called opportunistic infections because they take advantage of the weakened immune system. Ultimately, people do not die from AIDS itself, they die from one or more of these opportunistic infections. It is believed that all people who become HIV+ will eventually have AIDS.

There is no known cure or vaccine for AIDS. While anti-viral medications and healthy behavior can improve the quality and length of life for some people living with AIDS, these treatments do not work for everyone and may cause harmful side effects.

It can take several years before HIV breaks down a person's immune system and causes AIDS, and people may show few symptoms for several years after they are infected. People who appear perfectly healthy may not know they have the virus and can pass it on to others. 1 out of 4 Americans with HIV do not know they have the virus. The only way to know if you have HIV is to GET TESTED.

How does HIV affect the immune system?

What is an opportunistic infection?

Why is HIV/Aids so dangerous?

What is the difference between HIV and Aids?

Standards RST.6-8.1, RI.6.1, RI.6.2

next steps

http://www.lifebeat.org/just_the_facts.htm

lexile level 890

our goal is to find out what HIV and AIDS are

Sally
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