

HIV Awareness



World AIDS Day 2022

World AIDS day takes place every year on 1st December

Introduction by Dr Sarah Cavilla, consultant at axess sexual health.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2EQu7XlzE7E>

World AIDS Day gives an opportunity to show solidarity with the millions of people affected by HIV worldwide.

Learning objectives



These slides aim to:

- Raise a basic awareness of HIV and AIDS
- Reduce stigma related to HIV
- Dispel some of the myths surrounding HIV
- Increase confidence when working with a person living with HIV
- Raise awareness of HIV prevention
- Increase knowledge of testing and availability in your area.

HIV / AIDS

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus)

HIV is a virus that damages the cells in your immune system and weakens your ability to fight everyday infections and disease.

AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome)

AIDS is the name used to describe a number of potentially life-threatening infections and illnesses, such as certain cancers, tuberculosis (TB) and pneumonia, that can happen when your immune system has been severely damaged by the HIV virus.

Unlike the HIV virus, AIDS can not be transmitted from one person to another.

People who are HIV positive in the UK are very unlikely to develop AIDS, especially if they access treatment early.



How is HIV passed on?

If someone living with HIV has a detectable viral load (the amount of HIV in the body), they can pass on HIV through blood, semen, vaginal fluid, anal mucus and breast milk.



- Unprotected Sex (Heterosexual and homosexual)
- Oral sex (very low risk)
- Mother to baby in pregnancy and birth
- Breast feeding
- Sharing needles



- Touching, hugging or shaking hands
- Sharing utensils or toothbrushes
- Kissing, spitting or sharing saliva
- Urine or faeces
- Biting or scratching
- Insect bites
- Contact with a discarded needle
- Toilet seats
- Giving first aid

Around 93% of people living with HIV in the UK contracted the virus through unprotected sex.

Once outside the body, HIV usually can not survive for very long. Coming into contact with blood or semen that has been outside the body does not generally pose a risk for HIV transmission.

Who is most at risk of HIV?

Anyone who has had unprotected sex is at risk of HIV.

However, in the UK, HIV disproportionately affects certain groups of people

These include:

- Men that have sex with men (MSM)
- Black African men and women
- Trans and Non-Binary folk
- People from countries with a high prevalence, for example Eastern Europe, China and Asia
- Injecting drug users (only 1.9% of those receiving specialist care)

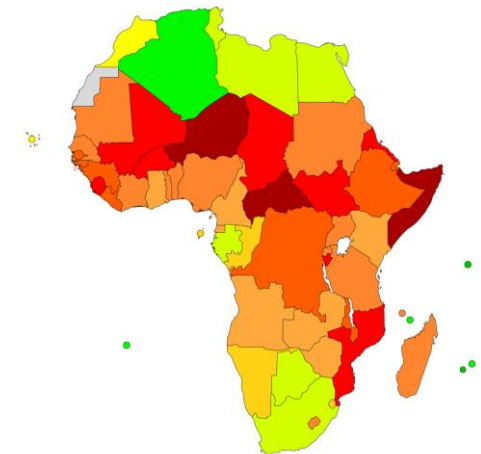




HIV Globally



- Since the beginning of the epidemic 84.2 million people have been infected with HIV
- About 40.1 million people have died from HIV/AIDS
- Globally 38.4 million people are living with HIV
- The burden of the epidemic varies considerably between countries.
- The African region remains the most severely affected with nearly 1 in every 25 adults living with HIV and accounting for more than 2 thirds of the people living with HIV world wide

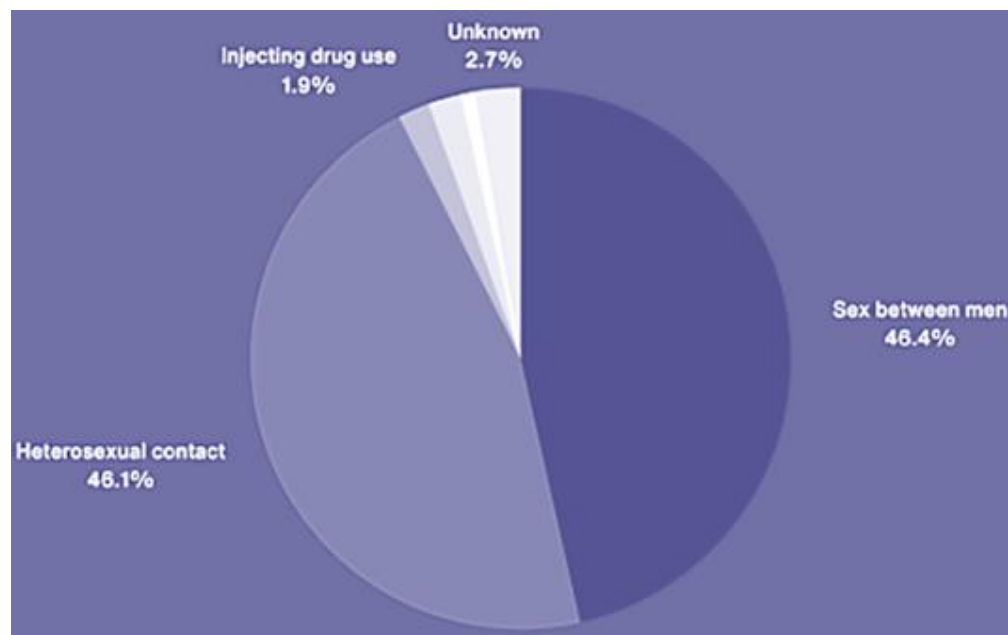


UK Statistics

105,200 people are estimated to be living with HIV in the UK in 2019,
around 2 per 1000 people

- 72.5% are men and 27.5% are women
- 42% were diagnosed at a late stage

Mode of transmission of those accessing HIV specialist care in 2019



For the first time in 20 years the number of people contracting HIV through heterosexual sex is similar to those having sex between men.

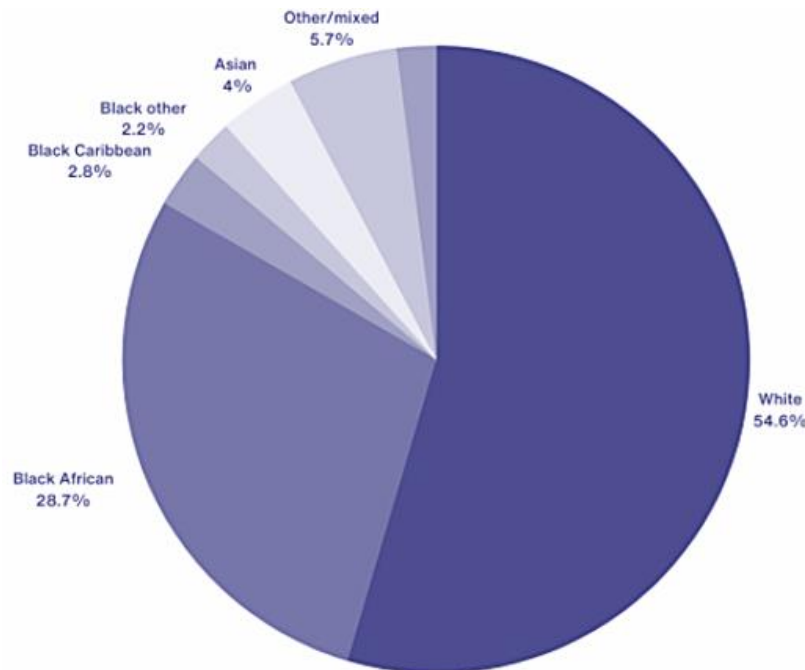
Vertical transmission (2%) occurs when HIV is passed from mother to baby, either in the womb, during birth or via breastfeeding.

<https://www.nat.org.uk/about-hiv/hiv-statistics>

Statistics

HIV prevalence in the general heterosexual population is low

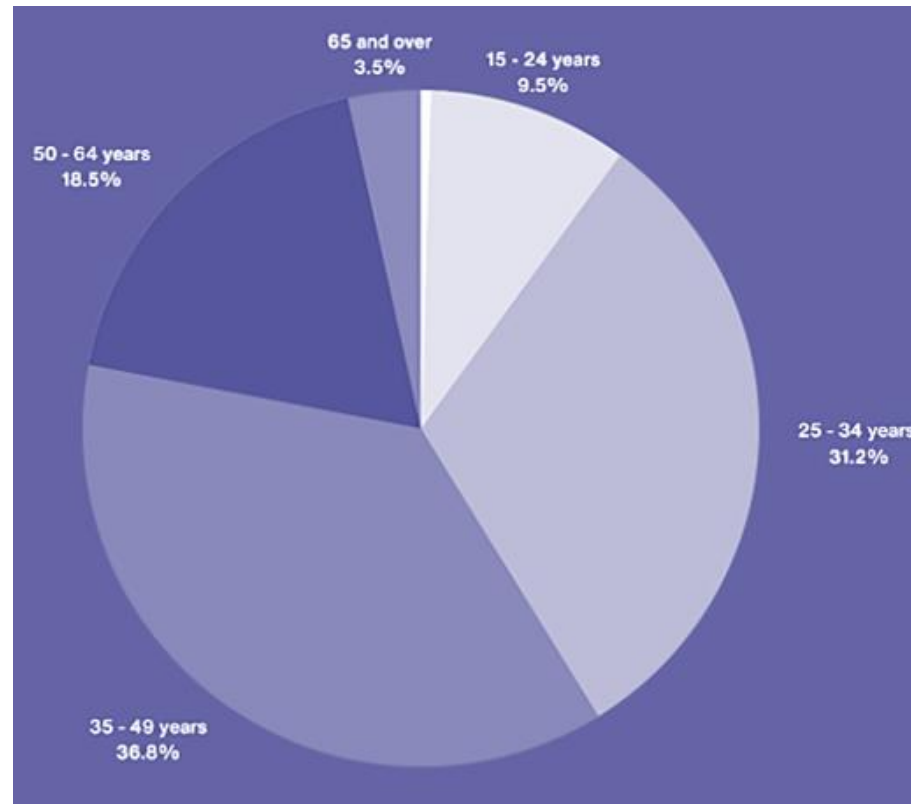
Ethnicity of those receiving HIV specialist care in 2019



- Just over half of people receiving specialist care in 2019 were white. Just over 1 quarter were Black African. Black African people are estimated to make up 1.8% of the population which puts them into a high risk group
- 3 in 4 of all heterosexual people living with HIV are from BME backgrounds

Statistics

As people can live longer, healthier lives with HIV we have seen the number of people with an HIV diagnosis who are aged 50 and over increase



More than two in five people accessing HIV care in 2019 were aged 50 or over. In the 1980's, those diagnosed with HIV in the UK were expected to die from an AIDS related illness. Today, the life expectancy of those prescribed anti-retroviral drugs at an early stage is in line with that of the general population.

Estimated risk per exposure of HIV

Many people wrongly believe that HIV is very infectious and is easily passed from one person to another. HIV is actually a **very fragile** virus.

Risk of HIV transmission per exposure from a known HIV positive individual not in treatment

Type of exposure	Estimated risk
Receptive anal intercourse	1 in 90
Insertive anal intercourse	1 in 666
Receptive vaginal intercourse	1 in 1000
Insertive vaginal intercourse	1 in 1,219
Blood transfusion (one unit)	1 in 1
Needle stick injury (while blood taking etc.)	1 in 333
Sharing injecting equipment	1 in 149

UK National Guideline for the Use of HIV Post-Exposure Prophylaxis Following Sexual Exposure (PEPSE) 2015

It is possible for a person to acquire HIV after just one exposure, while another person may have unprotected sex many times without any transmission of HIV.

<https://www.nat.org.uk/about-hiv/hiv-statistics>

HIV treatment

HIV is treated with antiretroviral medications, which work by stopping the virus replicating in the body

- Medication reduces the amount of virus in the body (viral load) to an undetectable level.
- HIV treatment does not cure HIV instead it suppresses the virus. If a person on effective HIV treatment has an undetectable viral load, they cannot pass on the virus.
- The “PARTNER study 1 and 2” recorded 135,000 acts of condomless sex between 1860 discordant couples (one partner HIV positive and on medication) and showed zero infections

Scientific evidence shows that people on effective treatment for HIV are not infectious.

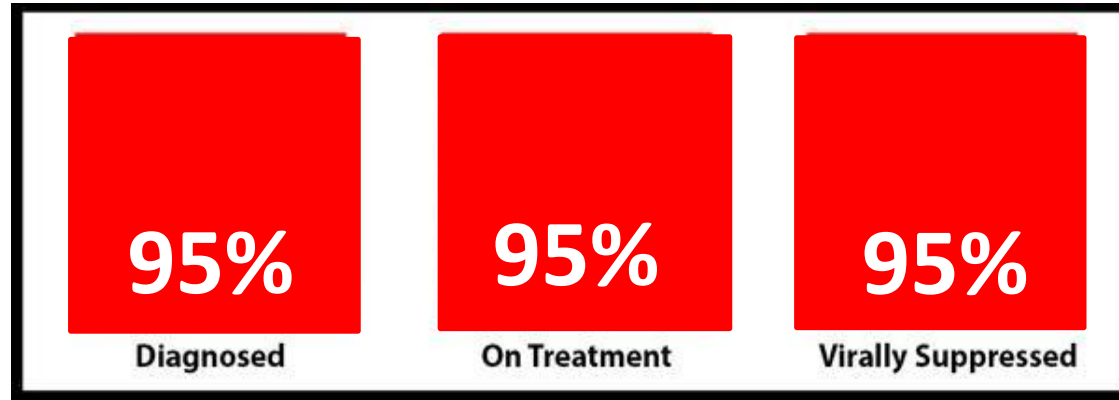
Dr Christian Jessen



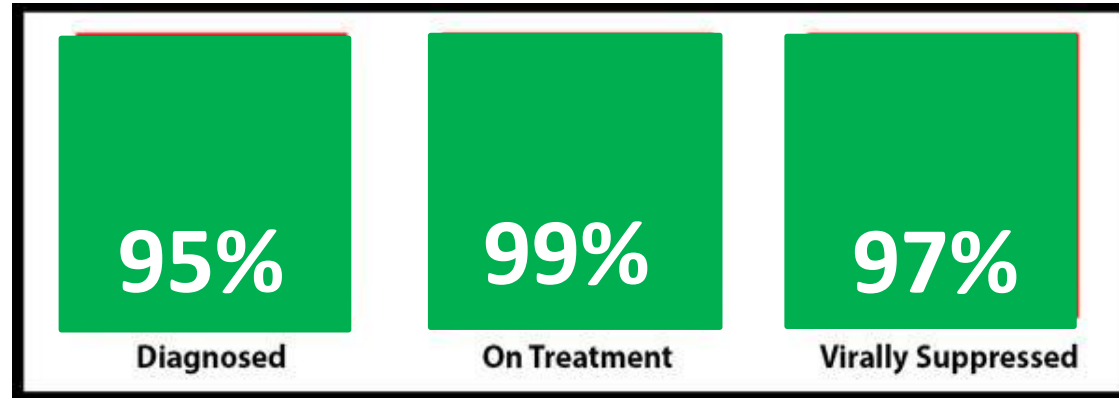


UNAIDS set a world target to end AIDS as a public threat by 2030

UNAIDS First target
by 2030:



Progress in UK in 2021



In the UK 95% of people living with HIV are diagnosed, meaning that 1 in 16 people (6%) living with HIV are unaware of their status. This is less than half the amount of people in compared with 2014. 99% are on treatment & 97% are virally suppressed. This means that overall 89% of people living with HIV in the UK are virally suppressed and unable to pass on HIV. The UK have met and exceeded the UNAIDS target for 2030.

HIV prevention

There are a number of HIV prevention methods which are proving to be effective. Overall new infections have fallen by 35% and new infections in MSM have fallen by 80%. (2011 -2019, Public health England 2020)

This has been achieved through a combination of:

- **Testing** (only 4% of MSM now decline testing, compared with 25% of heterosexuals)
- **Condoms/safer sex** (promotion of condom use and safer sex practices)
- **Treatment as prevention** (97% of those in treatment can not pass on the virus)
- **Early access to treatment** (in 2013 the average time into treatment was 3 years, its now 1 month)
- **PrEP** (HIV prevention medication, more info on next slides)
- **Education** (to reduce stigma and support informed choices)



PEP

PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis for HIV)

PEP (also called PEPSE) is a treatment that can stop an HIV infection after the virus has entered a person's body

- PEP can be used **after** the event if you are at risk of contracting HIV.
- PEP success rate is very high but must be taken within 72 hours of exposure and ideally within 24 hours.
- PEP is available free to those that meet the criteria, through sexual health clinics and some A&E departments.
- PEP is **not** a morning after pill for HIV. It does not always work. It is an emergency measure to be used as a last resort.
- PEP must be taken as instructed for a period of 28 days to increase the chance of it working.



<https://www.tht.org.uk/hiv-and-sexual-health/pep-post-exposure-prophylaxis-hiv>

PrEP



PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis)

PrEP is a drug taken by HIV-negative people before sex that reduces the risk of getting HIV

- In PrEP studies no-one became infected if they took PrEP as recommended.
www.iwantprepnnow.co.uk/prep-trials/
- Taking PrEP before being exposed to HIV means there is enough of the drug inside you to block HIV if it gets into your body.
- PrEP should be used alongside condoms to protect against other STI's
- England now offers PrEP free under the NHS. Please ring your local axess clinic and speak to a professional for advice if you feel PrEP would benefit you.
- Generic PrEP is also available to buy online. Costing around from £17 per month.

If you are interested in finding out more, please visit

www.iwantprepnnow.co.uk or www.prepster.info

Stigma and Discrimination

There is a huge amount of stigma around HIV, usually born out of fear, lack of knowledge or making moral judgements about how someone contracted the virus

- A person's HIV status is **strictly confidential**. They are **never** legally obliged to disclose this to **anyone**, even sexual partners.
- HIV status, if made public, can have a devastating effect on people's lives due to misinformation and stigma.
- Many people choose never to disclose their status, as it is their right.
- Private information on a person's HIV status should never be shared or recorded unless directly related to their healthcare.
- It is often the stigma that is far more disabling than the virus itself.



Equality Act



Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 makes certain types of discrimination unlawful. Anyone living with HIV has the same protections as disabled people have. They are protected from discrimination in employment and education, when accessing goods, facilities and services and when buying or renting property.

The following could be unlawful discrimination of a person living with HIV

- Refusing to provide someone with a service or take them on as a client.
- Giving someone a service of lesser quality, or on poorer terms, than would normally be offered.
- Refusing to employ a person with HIV or treat them less favorably than others.
- Behaving in a way which causes someone distress or offends or intimidates them.



HIV home screening



axess work in partnership with SH:24 to provide a free online sexual health testing service that provides confidential home-testing for chlamydia, gonorrhoea, syphilis and HIV.

Testing is also always available in all axess clinics.

The only way to know for sure if you have HIV is to test. If you fall into a high-risk group (Men who have sex with men, Black African people or those who share needles) you are advised to test regularly.

- This free online service is available to anyone living in an axess area (Warrington, Halton, Liverpool, East Cheshire and Knowsley)
- Order a kit through our website. Type 'order a kit' in search bar. (Order in the morning as kits are restricted to a daily limit)
- Test at home following the clear picture instructions and video link. Then return in the pre-paid envelope.
- Most results are given by text within 24 hours after the kit is received. Reactive HIV results are given via a phone call and will require a follow up test.
- Free condoms can also be ordered through the website.

www.axess.clinic

HIV and STI prevention support

If you wish to speak with a specialist in confidence, please contact your nearest axess clinic or visit the axess website.

Clinics are available in:

Warrington, Halton, Liverpool, Knowsley and Cheshire East

Tel: 0300 323 1300 (Select area option)



www.axess.clinic

Where can I get further information?

- **Sahir House** (HIV support service based in Liverpool) www.sahir.org.uk
- **George House Trust** (HIV support service based in Manchester) www.gh.org.uk
- **Terrence Higgins Trust** www.tht.org.uk
Call THT Direct on 0808 802 1221 for support, advice and information
- **National AIDS Trust** www.nat.org.uk
- **NHS** www.nhs.uk
- www.prepster.info (information on PrEP)
- www.lwantprepnw.co.uk (information on PrEP)

You can read Public Health England's annual report on HIV in the UK here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hiv-annual-data-tables>