- AIDS / HIV

HIV: Know the facts

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HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) can be easily treated, but Hiv-related stigma is incredibly harmful. When we understand the facts, there is nothing to fear. Open conversations can help us recognise and update our own assumptions and support others to learn more.

HIV is a virus that attacks the immune system. Without treatment, the immune system gradually gets damaged, so the body cannot fight off certain germs, which can lead to infections and illness.

HIV can be passed on through bodily fluids, such as, blood, semen, rectal and vaginal fluids, and breast milk.

HIV cannot be passed on through saliva, sweat, kissing, hugging, or sharing food.

AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) is when a person's immune system has been badly damaged by the HIV virus. A person with AIDS can develop infections and illnesses that are life-threatening.

There is excellent treatment available for HIV. The treatment suppresses the virus and stops it from damaging the immunesystem.

Treatment is available for everyone living with HIV in New Zealand, whatever their residency status.

With early and effective treatment, people with HIV can live long and healthy lives, and will not progress to AIDS.

When a person living with HIV has been on medication and has had undetectable virus for at least six months, there is zero risk of passing on HIV through sex.

This is called U=U (undetectable = untransmittable).