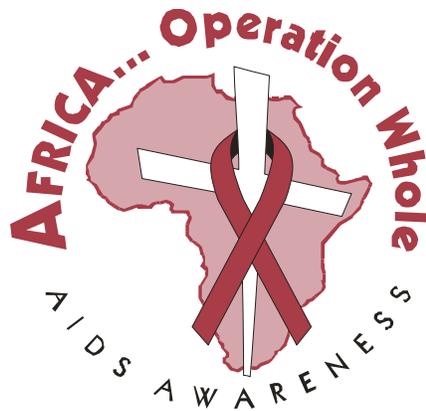


3

HIV / AIDS STATISTICS



HIV/AIDS STATISTICS

(Combined Worldwide and Sub-Saharan Africa)

⇒ STAT 01

⇒ FACT 01

Is There Really Such a Thing as AIDS?

This is the question that is often either “thought” or “asked”. Many people do not really believe there is such a thing as AIDS, or if there is, that it is as bad as reported, or that it affects them. Some common myths about HIV and AIDS are:

⇒ FACT 16

- **AIDS is an American myth to discourage sex. American Idea to Discourage Sex (AIDS).** Unfortunately, some Americans engage in the same denial thinking it is the African Idea to Discourage Sex. Of course, neither is true.
- **It is a scare tactic** (particularly by authority figures to youth) **to try to prevent people from having sex.** Many young people believe that their parents use the threat of AIDS to make them behave, but in reality there is no such thing as AIDS.
- **It is only prevalent in certain high-risk behavioural groups** (e.g. prostitutes, gays, street dwellers, drug users, etc.) **but, HIV/AIDS is not common in ordinary people like you and me.** That is not true. HIV looks only for a body to live in and it does not discriminate as to whom. HIV and AIDS tracking proves that people of all races, creeds, socio-economic levels, rural or urban, educated and uneducated, rich and poor alike can and do become infected with HIV resulting in AIDS.
- **Only females carry the HIV virus and men do not.** Therefore, some wrongly conclude that men do not become infected with HIV resulting in AIDS. This is not true. (Note: see Chapter 4 on male and female infection information.)

⇒ FACT 32

Do I Have to be Concerned About HIV and AIDS?

Yes, with over 40 million people in the world as of the latter end of 2004 being HIV infected, we must all take ownership of this AIDS pandemic. We can safely say now that every living person falls into two (2) categories with regards to AIDS:

- **THE INFECTED** – individual persons who are already (either unknowingly or knowingly) infected with the deadly virus that will cause them to get AIDS.
- **THE AFFECTED** – everyone else who will either have a family member, close friend, neighbour, or acquaintance with HIV infection or into full-blown AIDS. Into the new millennium HIV and AIDS will affect almost everyone, particularly in Africa. In some parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, this is already the case with people in several countries reporting that as many as 20% of their extended families have already died of AIDS during the ‘90s’. Each person must take ownership of AIDS; **DOING SOMETHING** about HIV and AIDS is everyone’s responsibility and it will take each person doing his/her part to stop this killer pandemic.

⇒ BIBL 13

Some Typical Attitudes in the Community Regarding HIV and AIDS

- **Denial** that there is a problem and denial that it affects them. Many people still think this is someone else's problem, not theirs. It is "those" people's disease, not mine!
- **Fear** to even talk about HIV and AIDS hoping that by ignoring it, it will go away. Fear that if they get involved people might think they are infected and shun them. Fear of talking to their children about AIDS because of the sexuality aspect of the disease, which has in the past been a NO NO subject to talk about.
- **Bargain** that HIV and AIDS can't come to me or my family because of our status, education, our family name, position, race, culture, etc. Many people believe that they are exempt from this disease.
- **Depression** feeling that already the pandemic of HIV and resulting AIDS is too far gone and the situation is hopeless. Therefore, they don't take responsibility for the disease themselves; they don't get involved; and they take on a totally negative attitude about HIV and AIDS. One should rather embrace a positive attitude saying, "What can I do to be part of the solution to HIV and AIDS?"
- **Acceptance & Action** that although this disease is terrible, there are things I can do about HIV and AIDS. Here are a few:
 - Take personal responsibility in the pandemic.
 - Be responsible and moral in my own sexual habits.
 - Be a positive role model regarding morality and sexuality.
 - Find a place of personal involvement in teaching my family and those around me about self-empowerment over HIV and AIDS and related issues.
 - Help teach community youth before they become infected.
 - Help comfort families who are affected by HIV and AIDS.
 - Help the sick and those dying with AIDS, with practical love and home care.
 - Get HIV tested and encourage others to do the same.

➔ STAT 16

HIV and AIDS Worldwide and Regionally

- There are 16 countries in Africa in which more than 1/10 of the adult population is infected with HIV.
- In 7 Sub-Sahara countries, one adult in five has the virus.
- In Botswana 37.3 % of all adults are infected.
- In South Africa, 21.5 % are infected.
- Aids deaths in 2004 – 3.1 million. Adults – 2.6 million, Children under 15 – 510,000
- Aids kills 8,000 every day, 1 person every 10 seconds.
- With a total of 5.3 million infected people, South Africa has the largest number of people living with HIV/Aids in the world and there is no sign of a decline. (avert.org 2005)
- The Ivory Coast is already the worst affected in the world.
- In Nigeria, over 5 % of all adults have HIV.
- The prevalence rate among adults in Ethiopia and Kenya have reached double-digit figures and continues to rise.
- Uganda has brought its rate down to 4.1 % from a peak of 14 % in the 1990's and now Zambia is attempting to follow this same course.
- On average there are 13 women living with HIV for every 10 infected men.

➔ STAT 26

➔ STAT 03

- Life expectancy at birth has dropped below 40 years in 9 African countries: Botswana, Central African Republic, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- Over 20 million people have died of Aids since the 1st case was identified in 1981. (UNAIDS Executive Summary 2004)
- Currently (December 2004) there are 2.2 million children under 15 living with Aids.
- Worldwide there is an increase of 14,000 infections every day (that is 583 an hour) more than 95% in developing countries.  STAT 35
- More than 12 million children have lost one or both parents to Aids in Sub Sahara Africa.  STAT 36
- In many Sub-Saharan countries, between 50% and 70% of hospital beds are AIDS-related illnesses.
- The average life-span in Africa is usually between 3-7 years after infection. However some HIV-infected live healthily for 10 years or longer.
- One in five men in South Africa has been raped.

References: UNAIDS – 2004 Report on the Aids Epidemic – July 2004 CDC- HIV Prevention Strategic Plan – Through 2005. Avert.org – World Stats 2005  STAT 50

Note: In talking to countless medical people in the various countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, the authors feel that while many of these statistics relate to South Africa (because information has been more readily available) HIV/AIDS would be reflected similarly in the Sub-Saharan surrounding countries.

Why is HIV/AIDS More Widespread in Africa Than in Other Parts of the World?

The reasons are not because of race or culture, but some reasons are:

- The strain of the HIV virus in Africa is generally different than the strain in the Americas.
- Lack of adequate medical care and availability of inhibitors for longevity of life for HIV infected.  STAT 30
- HIV testing for individuals less available and still stigmatised.
- Multiple sex partners, polygamy included, which can lead to promiscuity.
- Socio-economic poverty leading to improper diet, medical care, etc.  STAT 31
- Breakdown of traditional values of morality resulting from influx of confusing and foreign value systems.
- Employment location far from the family unit, resulting in promiscuity in marriage, girlfriends, boyfriends, etc.
- Socio-economic poverty resulting in an upsurge of prostitution.
- Lack of education regarding the disease resulting in myths (i.e. if you think you may be HIV infected you sleep with a virgin child which will chase HIV and/or AIDS away: if you feel like sex and don't have it, your blood will turn salty or your private parts will shrink).  SEXU 15
- Misinformation by some traditional doctors/healers resulting in usage of unsterilised tools for circumcision, etc.
- Prevalence of other untreated, sexually-transmitted disease/s (STDs) which make an individual more susceptible to HIV infection.  SEXU 32

- High percentage of HIV-infected mothers passing the infection to their babies either prepartum (before birth), intrapartum (during birth), or postpartum (after birth by infected breast milk).
- Increasing incidence of sexual abuse of children: one factor being that many family members do not have adequate housing and must share small living quarters. Sexual abuse is also perpetuated because of the lack of community infrastructure to deal with sexual abusers.
- High rate of divorce and couples sleeping together rather than the traditional customary marriage.
- Disintegration of the traditional extended family unit.
- Introduction of homosexuality into the culture, which was not in African culture in the past.
- Breakdown of traditional extended family system of law and order resulting in accelerating and unabated crime in many African cities.
- Migration from the rural areas to the city with exposure to unemployment, crime, and differing value systems.
- Possibility of sexual addiction (although a relatively new concept) in areas where polygamy is legal, sometimes resulting in a greater degree of promiscuity, particularly in men.
- Female cleansing practices in some African countries which can further spread HIV infection.

These are some reasons given as to why HIV and AIDS is so widespread in Africa. It should be noted, however, that HIV and AIDS are accelerating at an alarming rate also in India, Thailand, and other areas of the world. In general, it is safe to say that HIV and AIDS is spreading rapidly in almost every country worldwide.

These Statistics Bring Fear to Many

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AFRAIDS is another disease resulting from HIV. It is probably safe to say that no other disease has caused as much fear as has AIDS.

⇒ STAT 11

The GOOD NEWS is that no one has to be AFRAID of AIDS once he/she realises the HOPE that Jesus Christ offers, both for the AFFECTED and the INFECTED.

⇒ STAT 12

Jesus Christ gives HOPE through forgiveness of sin. Jesus Christ gives HOPE through giving comfort to the dying. Jesus Christ gives HOPE by providing healing for the sick and afflicted. Jesus Christ gives HOPE for life in the hereafter through salvation. Jesus Christ offers HOPE to all those who mourn. Jesus Christ is the ONLY real HOPE in the crises of HIV and AIDS. Those who call themselves Christians must be bearers of this HOPE in Jesus Christ by demonstrating compassion, care, involvement and love in the midst of a world with AIDS.

Satan Comes to Do Three Things

➡ BIBL 02

Satan's strategy has never changed. He comes to ROB, KILL and DESTROY.

John 10:10 *"The thief does not come except to steal, kill and destroy..."*

Jesus Comes to Bring Life

➡ BIBL 03

Jesus Christ, God's Son, comes to do the very opposite of Satan...to give life.

John 10:11 *"...I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly. I am the Good Shepherd! The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep."*

God Made Each Person with the Ability to Choose

➡ STAT 13

Animals cannot make choices about their sexuality. Dogs just have sex! God made each individual different from an animal. You are special; you can make choices! A person does not have a choice regarding many diseases they contract. However, with AIDS (other than innocent victims) everyone has a choice about contracting it. HIV resulting in AIDS is preventable; one does not have to become infected with HIV and AIDS. Each person has a choice.

Deuteronomy 30:19, 20 *"...I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore, choose life that both you and your seed will live ...that you may love the Lord your God, and that you may obey His voice, and that you may cleave unto Him; for He is your life and the length of your days; that you may dwell in the land that the Lord has given to you."*

➡ REFR 07

If asked, all people would say, "I do not choose to get AIDS; I choose life!" However, saying those words is not sufficient to prevent one from contracting AIDS. It is what you do with God's very special gift to you of sexuality that determines whether or not you truly choose life or death. AIDS is a killer. Choose LIFE!

➡ STAT 14

➡ STAT 15