
Grade Level: 9-12  
Curriculum Focus: Health  
Lesson Duration: Two+ class periods

Program Description
HIV infection rates have changed dramatically in recent years. Women and minorities are now the fastest growing groups of AIDS patients. Hear how some HIV-positive people have dealt with their disease and discover how doctors have taken new approaches to treatment.

Onscreen Questions

Before watching the video
- Do you know how HIV is transmitted from mother to child?
- As you watch the program, think about the risks associated with pregnancy for an HIV-positive woman. Note how she can reduce the risk of transmitting the virus to her baby.

After watching the video
- Discuss the types of educational programs that might be effective in lower-income communities to prevent the spread of HIV.
- Explain why HIV-positive members of these communities may have great difficulty receiving proper care and treatment.

Lesson Plan

Student Objectives
- Analyze facts about who gets AIDS, how those populations have changed in the past few decades, and how AIDS is contracted.
- Advocate for AIDS awareness and prevention.

Materials
- Computers with Internet access
- Paper, pens, pencils
- Newsprint and markers
- Poster board, magazines, video cameras (for AIDS awareness campaign)
Procedures

1. Ask students to share what they know about HIV. After a brief discussion, make sure students understand the difference between HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome). HIV infects and destroys certain white blood cells, severely damaging the immune system. AIDS is the final, life-threatening stage of HIV infection. A positive test for HIV does not necessarily indicate AIDS. Print out the facts below (from the Centers for Disease Control National Prevention Information Network) or display them on an overhead projector.

- **History:** The first case of AIDS in the United States was documented in 1981. The disease was prevalent in homosexual men in the 1980s, but its spread among that group slowed in the 1990s. However, the rate of AIDS continues to rise among heterosexual men and women, people who inject drugs, and other groups.

- **AIDS in the U.S.:** An estimated 800,000 to 900,000 people are currently infected with HIV.

- **Risk:** Of the 40,000 new AIDS cases reported in the U.S. each year, 42 percent are men who have sex with men, 33 percent are men and women infected by heterosexual sex, and 25 percent were infected by injection drug use.

- **Youth:** Up to 50 percent of all new HIV infections are among those under age 25. An estimated 20,000 young people (between the ages of 13 and 24) are infected with HIV every year. That is the equivalent of two young Americans contracting HIV every hour.

- **Gender:** Women account for 30 percent of new AIDS cases. (They represented only 7 percent of all AIDS cases in 1985.)

- **Minorities:** African Americans account for 54 percent of new AIDS cases, and Hispanics account for 19 percent. (African Americans and Hispanics represent 13 percent and 12 percent of the general population, respectively.)

2. Ask students to share what they know about contracting HIV; review the ways it is transmitted:

- Unprotected sexual contact with an infected person
- Transmission from an infected woman to her fetus or baby
- Through needle sharing among intravenous drug users
- Rarely, through accidents involving needle-stick injuries and other blood exposures to health care workers; they wear gloves, masks, and other protective clothing during many examinations and procedures.

3. Discuss ways to avoid getting and spreading AIDS.

- Avoid sexual contact with anyone who is or might be infected with HIV, or abstain from sexual contact.

- Practice protected sex with a person who is infected with HIV or whose infection status is unknown.
• Drug users should never share hypodermic needles, syringes, or other injection equipment and should seek help to stop taking drugs.
• Women may take the drug AZT during pregnancy and avoid breast-feeding to reduce the risk of transmitting HIV to the fetus or baby.
• If you have put yourself in a high-risk situation, get tested for HIV to avoid spreading it to others.

4. On the board or on a piece of newsprint, write the following groups:
• Homosexual men
• Heterosexual men
• Heterosexual women
• Adolescents
• Drug users
• Minority youth
• Pregnant women
• Members of the armed forces
• Homeless and poor people
• Prisoners

5. Divide students into pairs or small groups and have them choose one population group to learn more about its particular risk for getting HIV/AIDS. They will find statistics, background, and prevention resources at http://www.thebody.com/whogets.html. As students conduct their research, have them consider the following questions:
• What are the specific dangers for this population for contracting HIV/AIDS?
• How has the risk of contracting the disease changed for this population over the past several years? (Provide statistics when possible.)
• What specific behaviors put this population at risk?
• How could members of this population change their behavior to avoid getting or spreading the disease?

6. Finally, ask student groups to create a public awareness campaign for that population that will be presented to the class. Encourage students to be creative and consider the tone, language, and medium that would be most appropriate for their audience. Examples of media include a public service announcement for teens, a brochure for obstetrics offices, a needle exchange program for public health clinics, a poster for clubs frequented by homosexual men, a Web page for young professional men and women, or a bulletin board for their school hallway. Have students discuss their specific approaches.
Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students’ work during this lesson.

- **3 points:** Students participated actively in class discussion, with maturity and insight; showed good understanding of the causes of HIV/AIDS and its prevention; demonstrated strong research skills; demonstrated above-average creativity and communication skills through the AIDS awareness campaign.

- **2 points:** Students participated in class discussion, with some maturity and insight; showed average understanding of the causes of HIV/AIDS and its prevention; demonstrated on-grade level research skills; demonstrated average creativity and communication skills through the AIDS awareness campaign.

- **1 point:** Students participated little in class discussion; had difficulty discussing topics with maturity and insight; showed below-average understanding of the causes of HIV/AIDS and its prevention; demonstrated weak research skills; demonstrated few creativity and communication skills through the AIDS awareness campaign.

Vocabulary

**AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome)**

*Definition:* The final, life-threatening stage of infection with HIV

*Context:* One way to prevent the spread of AIDS is to educate students and members of the community.

**HIV (human immunodeficiency virus)**

*Definition:* A virus that infects and destroys certain white blood cells, severely damaging the immune system and eventually causing AIDS

*Context:* Anyone who does not practice safe sex or injects drugs is at risk for contracting HIV.

**hypodermic needle**

*Definition:* A needle used to inject drugs beneath the skin

*Context:* Approximately 25 percent of new AIDS cases in the United States are caused by drug users who share hypodermic needles.

**safe sex**

*Definition:* Sexual activity and especially sexual intercourse in which the use of latex condoms and other measures are taken to avoid disease transmitted by sexual contact

*Context:* One way to avoid contracting HIV is to practice safe sex or abstain from sexual contact altogether.
**Academic Standards**

**National Academy of Sciences**


This lesson plan addresses the following science standards:

- Science in Personal and Social Perspectives: Personal and community health; Natural and human-induced hazards

**Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)**

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit link: [http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp](http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp)

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- Health — Knows how to maintain and promote personal health, Knows essential concepts about the prevention and control of disease
- Language Arts — Writing: Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process, Gathers and uses information for research purposes

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**Support Materials**

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the Discoveryschool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- [http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html](http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html)