

***"Everything is possible for him who believes."***

***- Mark 9:23***



# **Together we can fight against HIV & AIDS**



Working towards a just,  
responsible & compassionate society

308 Mahatta Tower, B-Block Community Centre, Janakpuri, New Delhi.  
Tele/Fax : +91-11-25516383/4/5, Email : [hq@eficor.org](mailto:hq@eficor.org), Website : [www.eficor.org](http://www.eficor.org)

# HIV & AIDS – POINTS TO PONDER

## **BASIC FACTS OF HIV and AIDS**

### **What is HIV & AIDS and the difference between HIV & AIDS?**

**HIV** means - **H**uman  
**I**mmuno-deficiency  
**V**irus.

- HIV is too small to see through an ordinary microscope, but it can be seen through an electron microscope.
- Begins to attack and destroy the immune system, which is our body's defence against disease, making us vulnerable to common and uncommon illnesses.
- Person with HIV may look and feel well for several years.
- Person may not know s/he has HIV inside her/his body as s/he can't see it.

**AIDS** means - **A**cquired – means not from birth  
**I**mmune Deficiency – the condition where a person's immune system cannot protect the body resulting in an increased susceptibility to various infections and cancers  
**D**eficiency  
**S**yndrome – means a collection of symptoms of many diseases

### **AIDS becomes visible when:**

- Person's immune system becomes weakened and can't fight off diseases
- One or more severe diseases occur in the person e.g. TB, thrush, shingles, certain types of pneumonia, some cancers, specific blindness and mental diseases.

HIV attacks the immune system of the body by getting inside the special white blood cells called the T-cells or helper cells and destroying them. It takes an average of 8 to 12 years from the entry of the virus to reach the stage of AIDS.

### **How is HIV transmitted?**

HIV is found in all body fluids but has a very high concentration of the virus in only 4 of them

- Blood and blood products
- Semen
- Vaginal fluids
- Breast milk

### **HIV is spread in the following ways:**

- Sexual intercourse with an HIV infected person.
- HIV infected blood or blood products.
- Use of infected syringes/needles.
- HIV-infected mother to her baby during pregnancy, labour and delivery and through breast feeding.

### **HIV is NOT spread through:**

- Sharing food, crockery, cutlery, towels or linen
- Insect/animal bites
- Touching, hugging, kissing or shaking hands
- Eating food prepared by someone with HIV
- Sneezing or coughing
- Using the same toilet

HIV does not spread by working or interacting with someone who is HIV infected. This is because the virus survives for only a brief period outside the body and cannot get into the blood through the intact skin.

### **How can HIV & AIDS be prevented?**

#### **Sexual Transmission**

- **A** – Abstinence – No premarital/extramarital or anal sex
- **B** – Be faithful – Husband & wife being faithful for life
- **C** – Condom use- Gives some protection only but not 100%

### Blood and Blood Products Transmission

- **A** - Avoid sharing syringes/needles
- **B** - Blood/blood products tested for HIV
- **C** - Clean/sterile/new medical equipment

### Mother to Child Transmission

- **A** - Antiretroviral tablet to women who are pregnant and baby at 4-6 days of age reduces the transmission by 50% (approx. 15% from 30%)
- **B** - Breast feeding exclusively for first 6 months
- **C** - Caesarean Section for delivery (reduces transmission to around 1%)

### The Global Scenario

	Estimate	Range
People living with HIV & AIDS in 2007	33.0 million	30.3-36.1 million
Adults living with HIV & AIDS in 2007	30.8 million	28.2-34.0 million
Women living with HIV & AIDS in 2007	15.5 million	14.2-16.9 million
Children living with HIV & AIDS in 2007	2.0 million	1.9-2.3 million
People newly infected with HIV in 2007	2.7 million	2.2-3.2 million
Children newly infected with HIV in 2007	0.37 million	0.33-0.41 million
AIDS deaths in 2007	2.0 million	1.8-2.3 million
Child AIDS deaths in 2007	0.27 million	0.25-0.29 million

More than 25 million people have died of AIDS since 1981.

Africa has 11.6 million AIDS orphans.

At the end of 2007, women accounted for 50% of all adults living with HIV worldwide, and for 59% in sub-Saharan Africa.

Young people (under 25 years old) account for half of all new HIV infections worldwide.

In developing and transitional countries, 9.7 million people are in immediate need of life-saving AIDS drugs; of these, only 2.99 million (31%) are receiving the drugs.

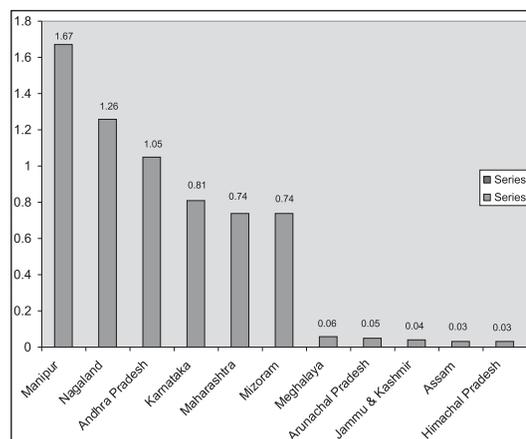
### Source:

[www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org)  
[www.avert.org](http://www.avert.org)  
<http://www.smh.com.au/news/Asia-Tsunami/Tsunami-death-toll-passes-283000/2005/01/27/1106415737181.html>

### The Indian Scenario

- It is estimated that there are 2.4 million people living with HIV July 2007
- Of these, the number of children estimated to be HIV infected is 100,000 (4%)
- Number of children estimated requiring ART services is 40,000
- The highest prevalence rates are found in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland
- No of ART centre functioning in India as on 2008 – 172. The Integrated Counseling and Testing Centre (ICTC) increased from 109 in 2001 to 4245 in September 2007. the number of person for testing increased from 0.14 million to 5.9 million persons in 2007

Estimated Adult HIV Prevalence, State wise, India, 2006



### Source:

[www.avert.org/indiaaids.htm](http://www.avert.org/indiaaids.htm)  
[www.nacoonline.org](http://www.nacoonline.org)  
[www.aids2008.org/Pag/ppt/THAB0104.ppt](http://www.aids2008.org/Pag/ppt/THAB0104.ppt)  
[www.data.unaids.org/pub/Report/2008/india\\_2008\\_country\\_progress\\_report\\_en.pdf](http://www.data.unaids.org/pub/Report/2008/india_2008_country_progress_report_en.pdf)

# ORDER OF WORSHIP

- |                           |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. CALL TO WORSHIP        | 9. NEW TESTAMENT READING |
| 2. HYMN                   | 10. OFFERING             |
| 3. OPENING PRAYER         | 11. RESPONSIVE READING   |
| 4. RESPONSIVE READING     | 12. SERMON               |
| 5. PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS | 13. HYMN                 |
| 6. OLD TESTAMENT READING  | 14. SENDING FORTH        |
| 7. FACE THE REALITY       | 15. BENEDICTION          |
| 8. HYMN                   |                          |

## 1. Call to worship:

Jesus said, "You shall be my witnesses ... to the ends of the earth." Witnessing is manifested in the joy that comes from a life of trusting God. Witnessing is not speaking only. It is about doing and acting. Christian witnessing is in the actions of every Christian who lives out the "good news of Jesus Christ." Witnessing is also manifested in the compassionate action of caring persons, individuals and communities who carry God and God's compassion into the world. We are gathered today out of a concern for immense suffering among the people living and dying with AIDS. We are also gathered out of concern for others and ourselves and acknowledge that we fail to understand the realities of AIDS. We don't even know how to respond in a meaningful way. Yet, we come simply as a people of faith, convinced that God will heal and bring justice and peace; that God gives wisdom and shows us the way; that God gives us grace.

## 2. Hymn: The servant King (or any other relevant song)

From heaven you came, helpless babe,  
Entered our world, your glory veiled;  
Not to be served but to serve,  
And give Your life That we might live.

**3. Opening prayer:** God of all goodness and grace, we come with gratitude and in need. We come in joy and in sorrow, striving to build the Kingdom as a place of hope and promise. Unify us with all who live with HIV. Open our hearts and strengthen our will to serve. Fortify us with renewed vision of your Kingdom on earth as a place of justice, unconditional love and equity for all, especially people with HIV around the world. Pour out your love on all who care for the sick and suffering, especially family members, caregivers, health care workers and medical researchers. We pray that their faithfulness will be rewarded by your loving strength.

## 4. Responsive Reading:

**L:** Holy God, we know you hear the prayers and cries of your people.

**A:** Our lips express great need and we turn to your listening presence.

**L:** Loving and listening God, we pray for the strength needed to help ease the burden of illness and stand in solidarity with those living with HIV.

**A:** Help us to see that in sharing one another's grief, we grow in strength and compassion.

**L:** We pray for those infected and affected by HIV; may they be strengthened to call upon you and upon us for help and mercy.

**A:** Hear their prayers, God, and grant us the heart needed to respond to their calls. Help us to meet their needs with loving spirits and willing hands.

**L:** We pray for the young who are infected with HIV and those who are orphaned because of AIDS.

**A:** Extend to the young your loving presence and comfort them when they feel scared and all alone.

**L:** Gracious God, we thank you for the friends, families, religious organizations and medical communities who help care for and support those living with HIV. Help these people remain steadfast in their commitment to helping those living with HIV.

**A:** Holy God, fill them with the knowledge of your healing and redemptive love. Remind us all of the hope we find in you.

**L:** We pray for all who are ill that they may have courage, strength and hope.

**A:** O God, inspire us to love and care for all of your children. Help us to serve those in need so that we may serve you better. Help us to work in unity with one another so that together we can bring change and make a difference in our combined fight against HIV & AIDS.

### **5. Prayer for forgiveness:**

We confess to you, God, the indifference, barricaded by prejudice, which deafens our ears to the cry of people living with HIV and their loved ones. We were blanketed by fear, which immobilizes our hands in reaching out to the needs of people living with HIV. We confess to you, our selfishness that has closed our hearts leading to separation and powerlessness of people living with HIV and their loved ones. We have wrapped ourselves in isolation which has caused us to abandon people suffering from this illness.

Forgive us and show us new pathways to love unconditionally. Give us courage to speak out against injustice done in the name of HIV.

### **6. Old Testament reading:** Nehemiah 2:11-20

### **7. Face the reality: Case study**

38 year old Prem\* from Ramnagar Gujari was battling for life when pastor Santosh visited him. His wife left him after she came to know about his HIV status. Pastor Santosh took him to Nagpur Medical College for treatment. He was treated for TB and later was put on ART. His health has improved considerably through medication and nutritional support.

Pastor Santosh said it was EFICOR's training on HIV and Awareness programme organized for pastors and church elders in Gondia Methodist church that opened his eyes to respond to the needs of people living with HIV and those affected by it. The immediate thing he did after the training was to mobilize his church members to collect an offering for Prem. They collected Rs.2,700/-. He is excited about the way his church members were able to help Prem in a small way. He says, "Together we can fight against HIV & AIDS to eradicate it"

\* name changed to protect identity

### **8. Hymn:** The Love of God – (or any other relevant song)

The love of God is greater far  
Than tongue or pen can ever tell;  
It goes beyond the highest star,  
And reaches to the lowest hell;

**9. New Testament reading:** 1Corinthians 12: 12- 30

**10. Offering:**

**11. Responsive reading:**

**L:** Come Lord, share this time with us just as you share our lives every day, with light and shadow, with music and joyful songs filling the air and with, at other times, the sad wail of the soul suffering without hope.

**A:** Come, Lord, share this time with us just as one day you shared the dusty paths of life with men, children and women, preaching, healing, suffering, dying, loving, raised up to keep alive hope in your new reign we keep seeking.

**L:** Come, Lord, share this time with us just as you shared words, gestures, hugs and a real loaf of bread broken in pieces, a sign of your complete commitment to a world hungry for peace, justice and life.

**A:** Come, Lord, share this time with us. Mark us with the fire of your presence transforming and renewing our lives.

**All:** Come, Lord, share this time with us. Strengthen each of us and inspire us to keep the promise to stop the spread of HIV.

**12. Sermon:**

**13. Hymn:** A mighty fortress is our God (or any other relevant song)

**14. Sending forth**

The challenge before us is enormous. We cannot fight this battle alone but together we can. Go, therefore, speak for people who cannot speak, love and serve them as you would do to God.

**16. Benediction**

Now may God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit the Comforter who work together in unity will help us to work together to fight against HIV & AIDS.

**Sources:**

From Andrew Black, Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA)

From National Council of Churches and Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary World AIDS Service 2004-

<http://www.pcusa.org/phewa/networks/pan/AIDSworkshop.pdf>

<http://www.e-alliance.ch/media/media-7092.doc>

<http://www.ucc.org/assets/pdfs/WorldAidsDay04.pdf>.

# Ideas for Action

## What you and your churches can start doing

### As an Individual

- Clarify misconceptions about HIV and AIDS. Read as much as you can on the subject.
- Learn more about HIV and AIDS and its impact on your community. Educate others about HIV and AIDS.
- Volunteer at a local organization working in the area of HIV and AIDS. You can also volunteer in a hospice or visit people in their homes.
- Help someone living with HIV and AIDS by being a friend. *A hug or squeeze of the hand lets him or her know that you care. (You cannot contract AIDS simply by touching.)*
- Stay in contact with your friend's family or care-partner. Offer to care for the person with AIDS in order to give their loved ones some free time.
- Offer to help with household chores. However, don't do something your friend would prefer to do for him or herself. Ask first.
- Take good care of yourself. Recognize your own limitations and honour them. Share with your pastor and Christian friends your own feelings of grief, helplessness and inadequacy. Getting the emotional and spiritual support you need will help you to be there for the person who has AIDS

### As a Church

- Educate others about HIV and AIDS - about its existence, how it spreads, how to reduce risk of infection, how to care for people with HIV and AIDS and the affected community. Talk openly and honestly in your church about prevention and treatment.
- Organize a community meeting. Invite educators, other pastors and business leaders, health care professionals, neighbours and friends to talk about HIV/AIDS and its impact locally. Even if few people show up, change can happen!
- Offer support and love to those living with, or affected by, HIV and AIDS
- Create venues within your church for appropriate pastoral care.
- Create communities of support for the restoration of emotional and spiritual balance.
- Promote reconciliation among community and family members who struggle to ask for, or provide, forgiveness for ungodly behaviour which has led to infection with HIV.
- Ensure that those living with HIV and AIDS are welcome to attend church and community activities
- Post fact sheets about HIV and AIDS on your bulletin boards and in your newsletters. You can also write positive stories of people to encourage your congregation to respond to the need around.
- Set aside from offering a portion to support People Living with HIV and AIDS
- Don't tolerate HIV and AIDS discrimination!
- **Observe World AIDS Day on 1st December in your church. You can come up with various ideas how to do it.**

### **About EFICOR:**

EFICOR is a national Christian relief and development organisation. It began in 1967 as a unit of Evangelical Fellowship of India (EFI), a national alliance of churches, church based institutions and individuals, to provide relief to the drought-hit state of Bihar. EFICOR became an independent organisation in 1980. Since then, EFICOR has been working with the needy and disadvantaged communities in the poorest districts in India

EFICOR is registered under the Karnataka Societies Registration Act. 1960 (Karnataka Act No. 17 of 1960) on 30th April, 1980. The Registration number is 70/80-81

EFICOR is also registered under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act. 1976 and the registration number is 231650411

EFICOR

308, Mahatta Tower,

B- Block Community Centre,

Janakpuri, New Delhi 110058

Tele/fax: +91-11-25516383/4/5

Email: [hq@eficor.org](mailto:hq@eficor.org)

Website: [www.eficor.org](http://www.eficor.org)