

Patterns of HIV/AIDS

What is AIDS? What is HIV?

AIDS, the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, is a disease caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). HIV attacks the immune system, weakening it until the infected person can no longer fight off diseases and eventually dies.

Means of transmission

Sexual Transmission: Sex between an infected person and an uninfected person is the most common means of transmission worldwide. Infected blood, semen, and vaginal fluids may transmit HIV to an uninfected person during sex.

Mother-to-Child Transmission: If a pregnant woman is HIV+, she may transmit HIV to her child before or during birth (through the baby's exposure to the mother's infected body fluids) or after birth (through breast feeding).

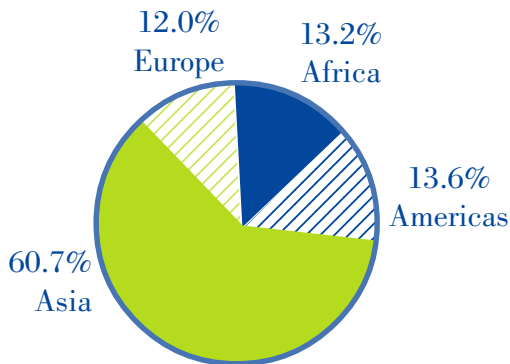
36.1 Million people are currently living with HIV/AIDS

Injection Drug Use: When a person uses a syringe to inject drugs, some blood leaks out into the syringe. An uninfected person who uses the same syringe (without first sterilising it thoroughly with bleach) may become infected.

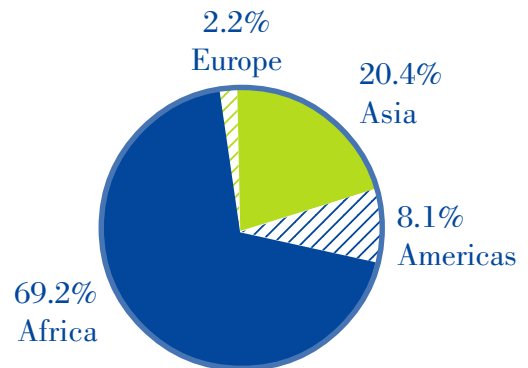
Blood Transfusion: HIV is present in the blood of an infected person, so any blood that the person donates or sells for medical use can infect someone else.

Distribution of the world's HIV/AIDS cases

Percent of World's Population



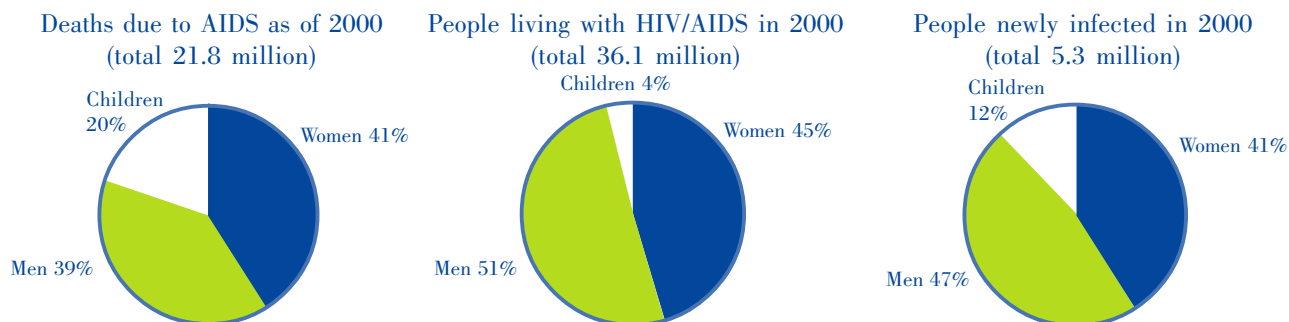
Percent of World's HIV/AIDS Cases



Note: Oceania represents 0.5% of the world's population and 0.1% of the world's HIV/AIDS cases.
 Source: PRB. *Despair and Hope: The HIV/AIDS Epidemic*. Washington DC: Population Reference Bureau, 2000.

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The Impact of HIV/AIDS on the world's women, men, and children*



* aged 15 and younger

Source: UNAIDS, *AIDS Epidemic Update: December 2000*. Geneva: UNAIDS, 2000.

Sub-Saharan Africa has felt the greatest impact of HIV/AIDS



→ AIDS is the fourth leading cause of death in the world, and the leading cause of death in sub-Saharan Africa.¹

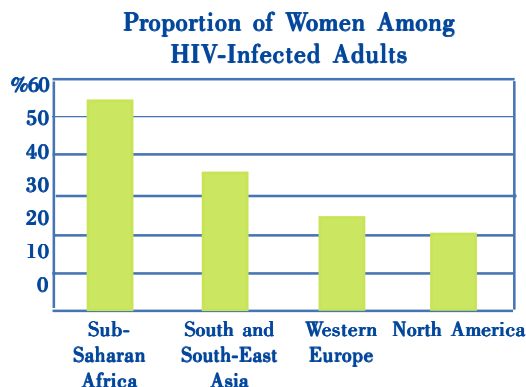
→ 25.3 million people in sub-Saharan Africa are currently living with HIV/AIDS.²

- 12.2 million are women
- 10.1 million are men
- 3 million are children (under the age of 15)

→ 1 in 10 uninfected women in sub-Saharan Africa becomes infected each year.³

Sources: ¹Gierycz, D. *Introduction*. Presentation at the Expert Group Meeting on the HIV/AIDS Pandemic and its Gender Implications, Windhoek, Namibia, 2000. ²UNAIDS, *AIDS Epidemic Update, December, 2000*. Geneva: UNAIDS, 2000. ³Susser, I. and Stein, Z. Culture, Sexuality and Women's Agency in the Prevention of HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa. *American Journal of Public Health*, 1998, 90(7): 1042-1048.

The rate of HIV/AIDS among women is rapidly increasing



41%
1997

→

47%
2000

Worldwide, women represent an increasingly larger percentage of adults (15 years and older) who are infected with HIV.

Source: UNAIDS, *AIDS Epidemic Update: December 2000*. Geneva: UNAIDS, 2000.

Source: Expert Group Meeting on the HIV/AIDS Pandemic and its Gender Implications. *Introduction*. Windhoek, Namibia: The Division for the Advancement of Women, November, 2000.