



Assembly of First Nations

WORLD AIDS DAY 2023

**Know your Status.
Reduce the risk. Get tested regularly.
Stay protected.**

What are HIV and AIDS?

The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is a virus that can weaken the immune system, the body's built-in defence against disease and illness, and can make an individual vulnerable to typically non-life-threatening infections. If not diagnosed and treated, HIV can develop into Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). However, with proper clinical treatment and culturally safe care, people living with HIV can manage the virus, live long and healthy lives and avoid passing HIV to others.

Risks of HIV infection:

- ✓ Sexual intercourse without protection such as condoms
- ✓ Getting a tattoo or piercing with unsterile equipment
- ✓ Borrowing or lending needles or other drug use equipment
- ✓ Having other sexually transmitted or blood-borne infections (i.e. Syphilis, Chlamydia, Hep C)
- ✓ Having sex under the influences of alcohol or drugs
- ✓ Being born to a mother who has HIV

Prevention, Screening, and Treatment Options:

There are several preventative and treatment options available through Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) to help protect yourself and others from HIV. These options are available to eligible to First Nations regardless of where they live.

PREVENTION	SCREENING	TREATMENT
Truvada is covered as an open benefit by the NIHB Program. Truvada, a PrEP (preexposure prophylaxis) anti-viral drug that, when appropriately self-administered can reduce your risk of contracting HIV if you are exposed to the virus. Speak with your health care provider about getting a prescription for Truvada. <u>- Note: An HIV and/or other blood test are needed before receiving a prescription for PrEP</u>	Talk to your health provider about HIV testing options available at the clinic. Advances in testing technologies have expanded options for screening including at home self-tests, however, if the self-test shows positive result, this you are required to get a confirmatory test from your health provider as a follow up and to connect with treatment and support.	Know your status, early diagnosis, and connection to culturally safe services can support treatment initiation and adherence. NIHB currently offers open benefit coverage for numerous HIV treatment drugs, including: Vocabria - an oral pill, taken daily, and Cabenuva - two injections, taken simultaneously once a month.

It is important to note that HIV is NOT a death sentence. People living with HIV can enjoy long and happy lives, HIV is a manageable chronic condition, speak with your health care provider about the risks, screening and treatment. If you would like to seek more information about living with HIV or find out more support services check your local clinic or visit the websites below.

Resources:

I'm Ready to Know: know your HIV status and access self-testing kits: <https://www.readytoknow.ca/>

Map of Services with HIV services/treatment: <https://wheretocatie.ca/>

Contact a NIHB Navigator in your area or the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program directly: <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1579274812116/1579708265237>

Hope for Wellness Helpline: <https://www.hopeforwellness.ca/> or 1-855-242-3310

First Nation Health Authority: <https://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/communicable-disease-control/blood-borne-disease-and-sexually-transmitted-infections-hiv-aids>

Government of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/hiv-aids.html>