

- In their roles as carers for people living with AIDS and orphans and vulnerable children.
- In accessing information on the risk of HIV and AIDS.
- Emotional support to help deal with the stigma and Discrimination that result from having a child or grandchild with HIV or AIDS.
- Psychosocial coping mechanisms to deal with stress, illness and grief.



Centre for Community  
Development Solutions

## Older Persons and HIV and AIDS

### How older persons can help fight HIV

- Leading by example: Live healthy be faithful to your partner, abstain from casual unprotected sex.
- Educating others to understand how HIV is spread and what we can do to protect ourselves.
- Promoting good cultural practices especially as it regards good morality and responsible behaviour
- Encouraging people to change sexual behaviour and to practice safe sex at all times.
- Promoting openness so as to break down the stigma and discrimination surrounding HIV and AIDS.
- Making others aware of HIV and AIDS and the plight of people living with AIDS and the problems faced by their families.
- Encouraging society to help care for people who are infected and affected.
- Encouraging HIV testing for all people who are sexually active and making sure there is proper counselling that goes with the testing.
- Raising awareness on the role of older people in caring for orphans and Vulnerable children and people living with HIV and AIDS.



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- Get tested Know your status
- Learn more about HIV and AIDS
- Stay healthy
- Protect yourself
- Educate others

**AGE IS NO PREVENTION**

**Sex does not end at 50!**

## What is HIV and AIDS

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus that damages and weakens the body's immune system—the system the body uses to fight off infection and disease. Having HIV puts a person in danger of getting other life-threatening diseases, infections, and cancers.

When the body cannot fight off the other diseases and infections anymore, HIV can lead to AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome). AIDS is the last stage of HIV infection. Not everyone with HIV will get AIDS.



## How is HIV transmitted

- Having unprotected sex — vaginal, anal or oral — with an HIV-infected person (male or female).
- Sharing needles or injection equipment with an HIV-infected person to inject drugs, including hormones, insulin or steroids.
- From an HIV-infected woman to her baby during pregnancy, birth or breastfeeding



## What you also need to know

- Testing is the only sure way to know if you are infected with HIV.
- A person infected with HIV may have no symptoms but can still infect others.
- HIV is not spread by hugs, handshakes, sharing food or utensils.
- There is no cure or vaccine for HIV. However, current treatments (ARVs) can keep you healthier longer.
- Being older does not prevent you from getting infected.



## Why You Need to know about HIV and AIDS

- To reduce your own risk of infection.
- To be able to care more effectively for people living with HIV and AIDS.
- To provide orphans and vulnerable children informed information about HIV and AIDS.

- To prevent you from spreading it to others.



## How you can live longer with HIV

- Get tested
- Get on ART and adhere to medication.
- Eat a healthy diet and try to exercise regularly.
- Always wear a condom when you have sex to protect yourself and others.
- Get treatment for sexually transmitted infections early
- Quit smoking: As people with HIV live longer and continue to smoke, they increase their risk of developing smoking related health problems. Quitting smoking is probably the most important step you can take to improve your health.
- Get help for drug/alcohol problems from professionals at health centres.

**Adherence**

- ✓ Ability to take all the medication as prescribed
- ✓ No missed doses
- ✓ The right drugs
- ✓ The right dosage
- ✓ The right time
- ✓ The right way

## In which areas do Older Persons need support

- Knowledge on HIV and AIDS, prevention, getting tested and management.
- Treatment and support for older people with HIV or AIDS.