

## Where and how to get tested

- The only way to know if you have HIV is to have a test for it at a clinic, doctor's office, hospital or STI Clinic.
- Testing is free, and involves a simple blood test, which takes very little time. You will have your results in about a week.
- Anonymous testing is available in both Edmonton and Calgary. To make an appointment, call the numbers below. You do not have to give your name to be anonymously tested.

**Edmonton Anonymous Testing:**

**780-342-2300**

**Calgary Anonymous Testing:**

**403-955-6700**

**STI/HIV Toll Free Information Line:**

**1-800-772-2437**

## Where can I get more information?

For more information about HIV, you can talk with your local health clinic, doctor or nurse, or call the following places. You do not have to give your name to receive information.

**Shining Mountains  
Living Community Services:  
(403) 346-9794**

**STI/HIV Toll Free Information  
Line:  
1-800-772-2437**



**Shining Mountains Living  
Community Services**

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# Aboriginal Communities



# And HIV

# HIV in Aboriginal Communities: A Reality

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## What is HIV?

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus that attacks the immune system and causes AIDS.



HIV affects all people, from all walks of life, and all

lifestyles. It exists in cities and towns, on farms, Reservations, First Nations, Inuit, and Metis Communities.

HIV is affecting Aboriginal people at an alarming rate. Our people are becoming infected at a younger rate than Non-Aboriginal people.



When all HIV information that is collected is considered, one Aboriginal person per day is becoming infected with HIV in Canada.

## How is HIV transmitted?

HIV is transmitted in four primary ways:

- Sex without a condom
- Sharing needles
- Through breast milk from a mother to her baby
- From a mother to her baby at birth



## Are there safe activities?

Some Activities which do not transmit HIV are:

Sweat Lodge Ceremonies , Sundances,

Sharing the Ceremonial Pipe or Communal Bowl, Building Tipis or Igloos

hugging, kissing, or snuggling

dancing, sharing utensils, drinking cups, or straws

holding hands, tears or handling or cooking food.

## How To Stay Safe

You can prevent yourself from getting HIV by:

- Using a condom every time you have sex.
- Not sharing needles.
- Making sure tattoo and piercing needles and ink have not been used before, and that all tattoo and piercing equipment is sterilized (ask the tattoo or piercing artist if they have and use a sterilizer).
- Making healthy choices around drugs including alcohol use.
- Ensure you and your partner are tested before you have sex.