

Teacher Answer Key: HIV Facts vs. Myths

Reference Manual & Curricular Guide

Teacher Guidelines:

Use this guide to review student placements. HIV is only transmitted through four specific body fluids: **Blood, Semen/Vaginal fluid, and Breast milk**. Casual contact like hugging, dry surfaces, shared food, or swimming pools present no risk because the virus is fragile and cannot survive exposed outside of human host systems.

QUICK REFERENCE SOLUTION KEY

● CANNOT Spread HIV (11 Items)

- **Hugging** — Hugging, high-fives, and general friendly physical contact.
- **Sharing Food & Drinks** — Eating off the same plate, using same fork, drinking from same cup.
- **Coughing or Sneezing** — Being near someone who is sick or coughing without blocking.
- **Mosquito Bites** — Bitten by a mosquito, tick, or other insects.
- **Sitting Next to Someone** — Sitting side-by-side in classrooms, public buses, or movies.
- **Sharing a Bathroom** — Sharing toilet seats, showers, bathtubs, or hand sinks.
- **Shaking Hands** — Brief physical contact like handshakes or high-fives.
- **Swimming Pools** — Swimming in the same public pool, lake, or hot tub.
- **Tears or Sweat** — Contact with a person's sweat, tears, or dry saliva.
- **Touching Surfaces** — Touching public doorknobs, desks, or water fountains.

● CAN Spread HIV (4 Items)

- **Sharing Needles** — Reusing or sharing syringes or piercing equipment.
- **Direct Blood Entry** — Infected blood entering another person's bloodstream.
- **Parent to Baby (No Treatment)** — From parent to baby during pregnancy or childbirth without medical protection.
- **Unprotected Intimate Contact** — Unprotected intimate or sexual contact with an infected partner.
- **Breastfeeding** — Feeding a baby breast milk from an untreated parent.

DETAILED CARD REFERENCE KEY (WITH SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATIONS)



Hugging

● Cannot Spread

"Hugging, high-fives, and general friendly physical contact."

THE SCIENCE:

HIV cannot be transmitted through dry skin, sweat, or casual touching. Hugging is 100% safe.



Sharing Food & Drinks

● Cannot Spread

"Eating off the same plate, using same fork, drinking from same cup."

THE SCIENCE:

HIV cannot survive in food or drink. It is not spread through saliva or digestive tracts.



Coughing or Sneezing

● Cannot Spread

"Being near someone who is sick or coughing without blocking."

THE SCIENCE:

HIV is not an airborne virus. It cannot travel in tiny water droplets when someone sneezes.



Sharing Needles

● Can Spread

"Reusing or sharing syringes or piercing equipment."

THE SCIENCE:

Used needles contain blood. Sharing them directly introduces another person's blood into your bloodstream.



Mosquito Bites

● Cannot Spread

"Bitten by a mosquito, tick, or other insects."

THE SCIENCE:

HIV cannot live or reproduce inside insects, and mosquitoes do not inject blood back into humans.



Direct Blood Entry

● Can Spread

"Infected blood entering another person's bloodstream."

THE SCIENCE:

Direct blood-to-blood contact (e.g., open wounds) is a high-risk route of transmission.



Sitting Next to Someone

● Cannot Spread

"Sitting side-by-side in classrooms, public buses, or movies."

THE SCIENCE:

Being close to someone has zero impact. HIV cannot travel through air, skin, or physical proximity.



Sharing a Bathroom

● Cannot Spread

"Sharing toilet seats, showers, bathtubs, or hand sinks."

THE SCIENCE:

HIV cannot survive on toilet seats or bathroom surfaces. You cannot catch HIV from common facilities.



Parent to Baby (No Treatment)

● Can Spread

"From parent to baby during pregnancy or childbirth without medical protection."

THE SCIENCE:

Without medical intervention, HIV can cross to the child. However, treatment makes this transmission rate nearly 0%!



Shaking Hands

● Cannot Spread

"Brief physical contact like handshakes or high-fives."

THE SCIENCE:

Intact skin acts as an excellent barrier. Casual greetings like handshakes cannot transfer HIV.



Swimming Pools

● Cannot Spread

"Swimming in the same public pool, lake, or hot tub."

THE SCIENCE:

Chlorinated water kills viruses. HIV cannot survive or travel through swimming pool water.



Tears or Sweat

● Cannot Spread

"Contact with a person's sweat, tears, or dry saliva."

THE SCIENCE:

HIV is not present in infectious concentrations in sweat, tears, saliva, or urine.



Unprotected Intimate Contact

● Can Spread

"Unprotected intimate or sexual contact with an infected partner."

THE SCIENCE:

HIV is sexually transmitted through fluids like semen or vaginal secretions without barrier protection (condoms).



Breastfeeding

● Can Spread

"Feeding a baby breast milk from an untreated parent."

THE SCIENCE:

Breast milk carries the HIV virus. Modern medicines can prevent this, but untreated milk can transmit it.



Touching Surfaces

● Cannot Spread

"Touching public doorknobs, desks, or water fountains."

THE SCIENCE:

HIV cannot survive outside of the human body, especially on hard, dry surfaces. Doorknobs are safe.