

passed into the bloodstream of another.

People who receive blood transfusions may get AIDS if the blood contains the AIDS virus. It is important to note that all blood donations in Canada are now being tested for antibodies to the AIDS virus. Blood that contains the AIDS virus antibodies is not used for transfusions. You **cannot** get AIDS from giving blood to the Red Cross or for medical examination, because needles used for medical purposes are always sterile.

Women who are carriers of the AIDS virus can pass it on to their children in the womb or during breast-feeding.

The AIDS virus has also been found in small quantities in saliva, tears, vaginal secretions and feces. These body fluids, however, do not have the same opportunity (as blood and semen do) to pass the virus into another person's bloodstream. **No cases of AIDS transmitted by these body fluids have been reported.**

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF AIDS?

The symptoms of AIDS or AIDS related illnesses are not specific, but they include the following:

- persistent heavy night sweats
- extreme fatigue
- severe weight loss
- enlarged lymph glands in the neck, armpits, or groin
- persistent diarrhea
- skin rashes or skin discolouration
- blurred vision or chronic headaches
- harsh, dry cough
- thick, grey-white coating on tongue or throat

Most people have one or more of these symptoms from time to time and, for the most part, should not become alarmed; however, **if any of the symptoms persist or become worse, check with your doctor immediately.**

HOW IS AIDS DIAGNOSED?

A physical examination and a number of tests are needed to diagnose AIDS. The AIDS antibody blood test currently available does not diagnose AIDS - it only shows that the virus entered a person's bloodstream sometime in the past, and may or may not be there actually.