

Focusing on HPV

Human papillomaviruses (HPV) are fairly common and can lead to infections. Different types of HPV cause warts or abnormal cell growth (dysplasia) in or near the anus or cervix. This abnormal cell growth can result in cervical or anal cancer. Genital HPV infections are transmitted by sex. HPV infections can last a long time, especially in people with HIV.

A Pap smear can be done to detect abnormal cell growth in the cervix. It can also be used to check the anus of men and women. Pap smears may be the best way to detect early cervical cancer, but a careful physical exam is sometimes better to detect anal cancers.

The key signs of HPV infection—warts or dysplasia—should be treated as soon as they show up. Otherwise, the problem could spread and be more likely to return after treatment.

Source: TheBody.com (www.thebody.com/content/treat/art6053.html).



Preventing Bone Loss

Bone loss occurs more often in people who are HIV positive than in those without the virus. But there are ways to prevent bone loss in people with HIV.

Lifestyle

Changing your lifestyle can help prevent bone loss. Keep your weight in proportion to your height and body frame. Try to avoid tobacco, caffeine, and alcohol use. Doing this will likely benefit your bone health. Bone loss can also occur from injuries, like fractures or breaks. Reduce your risk of falling or tripping to prevent bone injuries. This may mean making efforts to safeguard your life as you get older.

Diet & Exercise

Many Americans, including those with HIV, don't get enough calcium or vitamin D. Try to get 1,000 mg to 1,200 mg of calcium a day. Pregnant and postmenopausal women should get 1,500 mg

a day. You can get calcium from eating milk products, tofu, and vegetables and leafy greens. For vitamin D, try to get at least 200 IU each day. Good sources of vitamin D include eggs, liver, some fish oils, salmon, and swordfish.

Being active and getting exercise help make bones stronger. Try weight-bearing activities like power walking, jogging, climbing stairs, dancing, or running. Resistance exercises (eg, stretching and lifting weights) can strengthen your muscles and bones. Before exercising, talk to your doctor to learn exercises that are best for your health.

Supplements & Prescriptions

Taking supplements of vitamin D or calcium may be an option for you. Discuss with your health provider any supplement you take or want to take to ensure you are getting the right daily amount.

There are also some prescription drugs that increase bone loss. Avoiding or switching from these drugs can help. Talk to your health provider or pharmacist about which drugs increase bone loss and discuss your options before making any changes.

Source: TheBody.com (www.thebody.com/content/treat/art45213.html).

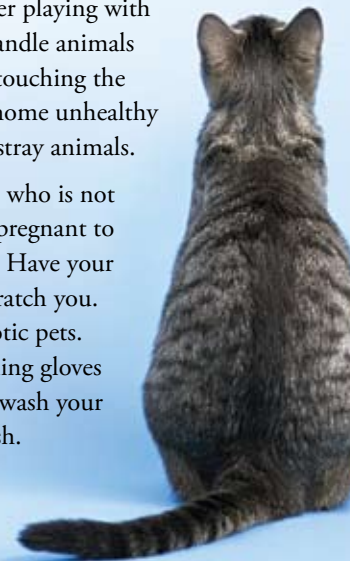
Avoid Infection From Pets

Most people with HIV can and should keep their pets. Owning pets can be rewarding. They can help you feel better mentally and physically. However, people who are HIV positive have health risks to consider because animals can carry infections that can be harmful.

To avoid infections from pets, always wash your hands with soap and water after playing with or caring for animals. Don't handle animals that have diarrhea, and avoid touching the stool of animals. Don't bring home unhealthy pets and be sure not to touch stray animals.

If you have a cat, ask someone who is not infected with HIV and is not pregnant to change the litter box each day. Have your cat's nails clipped so it can't scratch you. Avoid keeping reptiles and exotic pets. Wear vinyl or household cleaning gloves when you clean pet cages and wash your hands well right after you finish.

Source: CDC (www.cdc.gov/hiv/resources/brochures/pets.htm).



Healthy Living With HIV

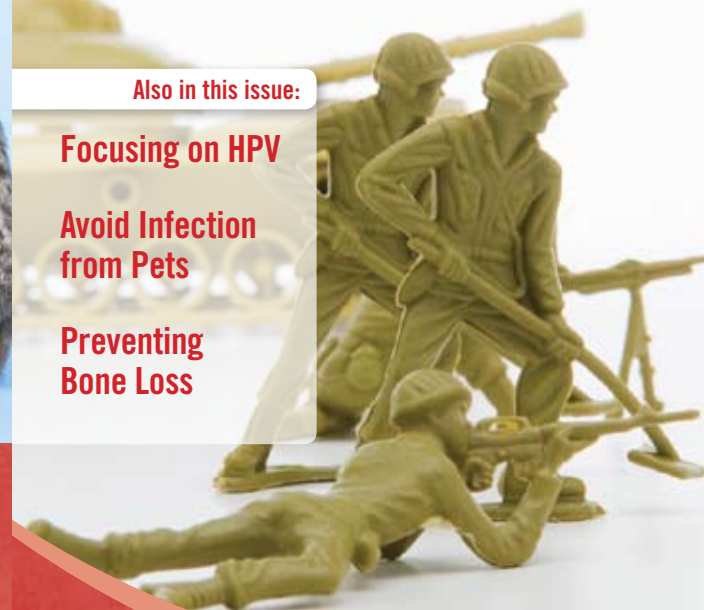
Battling Coinfection with HIV & Hepatitis C

Also in this issue:

Focusing on HPV

Avoid Infection from Pets

Preventing Bone Loss



The editorial content for this brochure was developed and created solely by the Patient Education Center. The content does not necessarily represent the opinions and/or views of our advertisers.

Publication of an advertisement or other product mention in Healthy Living With HIV should not be construed as an endorsement of the product or the manufacturer's claims. Such advertising or product mentions should similarly not be construed as either influencing or controlling the editorial content of Healthy Living With HIV. The appearance of or reference to any person or entity in the editorial material (including photographs) in this brochure does not constitute an expressed or implied endorsement of the product advertised. Readers are encouraged to contact the product manufacturer with any questions about the features and/or limitations of any product mentioned. The reader also is advised to consult appropriate medical literature and the product information currently provided by the manufacturer of each drug to verify indications, dosage, method, duration of administration, and contraindications.



Battling Coinfection With HIV & Hepatitis C



Hepatitis C virus (HCV) is one of the most important causes of chronic liver disease in the United States. The infection progresses more rapidly to liver damage in people with HIV. It can also affect how your HIV progresses and is managed.

All people who are infected with HIV should be screened for HCV infection. It's important for people with HIV to make efforts to prevent HCV infection if you don't have it. If you do have HCV, it's important to reduce your risk of chronic liver disease.

HCV Fundamentals

HCV is usually transmitted when you have been exposed to large or repeated direct punctures in the skin. When these punctures occur, your blood can become contaminated. HIV-HCV coinfection is common in people with HIV who use injection drugs. The coinfection is also common in people who have hemophilia and receive drugs to reduce their risk of blood clots. Your risk of getting infections at or around childbirth or by being sexually active is much lower for HCV than for HIV. Coinfection with HCV in people who have gotten HIV through sex is no more common than that of people in the general population.

The Effect of Coinfection

Chronic HCV infection develops in 75% to 85% of people who are infected with HCV. Chronic HCV infection leads to chronic liver disease in 70% of these people. HIV-HCV coinfection has also been linked to a higher risk for HCV-related cirrhosis (scarring) of the liver. Because of this, HCV infection is typically seen as an opportunistic infection in people living with HIV.

HCV is not, however, considered an AIDS-defining illness. Antiretroviral therapy and drugs used to prevent opportunistic infections can extend the lives of many people living with HIV. But despite the benefits of these drugs, HCV-related liver disease has become a big problem. It often leads to hospital admissions. In really bad cases, it can lead to death in people infected with HIV.

much alcohol. It's actually best to avoid alcohol altogether. If you have a drinking problem, get involved in an alcohol treatment program or a relapse-prevention program. Also, be sure to talk to your healthcare provider before taking any new medicines—such as over-the-counter drugs, alternative medicines, or herbal remedies—because of possible effects on the liver.

About 25% of people with HIV are also infected with the HCV.

Prevent Coinfection

People living with HIV who are not already coinfecting with HCV can do things to avoid getting HCV. Taking efforts to prevent HCV can also lower the risk of transmitting HIV to others. The table to the right lists things you can do to prevent HCV-HIV coinfection.

Manage Your Coinfection

People who are coinfecting with HIV and HCV should try to adopt safe behaviors. This can help prevent transmission of these viruses to others. If you have been infected with HCV, ask your doctor for information about preventing liver damage. Also, be sure to get checked out for chronic liver disease. And ask your doctor about treatments that can help.

If you are coinfecting with HIV and HCV, don't drink too

B vaccines. These vaccines are usually safe for patients at risk for the infections. Studies have shown that 2 out of every 3 people who are susceptible to HIV-HCV coinfection and get vaccinated will develop antibody responses.

Anti-HIV drugs do not have a big effect on HCV. However, being coinfecting with HIV and HCV can increase the risk for liver problems that come up because of the anti-HIV drugs you're taking. It's important that you follow up with your doctor regularly so you can see how well your antiretroviral drugs are working. If they're not, you and your doctor can try a different treatment strategy.

Treating HCV Infection

There are drugs available that specifically treat HCV infection. For example, people with HIV-HCV coinfection can take alpha interferon as a single-drug therapy to fight their HCV infection. Most studies show that the drug is well tolerated in coinfecting people. However, you and your doctor should first think about the drugs you're currently taking for HIV. Also consider any other medical conditions you may have. For example, some people living with HIV might have problems with substance abuse or had these problems in the past. In these cases, patients should get treatment for their coinfection but only together with substance abuse specialists or counselors.

Prevention Strategies

- Do not inject drugs. If you are an injection drug user, try to stop. Consider the following:
 - Get substance-abuse treatment.
 - Get into a relapse-prevention program.
 - Get counseling about safer injection practices.
- Do not share toothbrushes, razors, and other personal care items that might be contaminated with blood.
- Do not get tattoos or body piercings.

Source: CDC (www.cdc.gov/hiv/resources/qa/HIV-HCV_Coinfection.htm).