

A Study on Awareness about Healthy Living of HIV/AIDS Patients in Bihar, India

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Abstract

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is the infection that causes AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), it breaks down the immune system our body's protection against disease. Symptoms take 10 yrs. to develop .there is no cure but treatment is available. According to Bihar state AIDS Control Society(BSACS) 8128 HIV cases is have been diagnosed and number of AIDS cases is reported to be 1070.

Key Words: - HIV, Nutrition, Exercise, Family Support, Awareness

Introduction:

HIV stands for human immune deficiency virus. It breaks down the immune system – our body's protection against disease. HIV causes people to become sick with infection that normally wouldn't affect them.

AIDS is short for acquired immune deficiency syndrome. It is the most advanced stage of HIV disease. AIDS is a chronic potentially life threatening condition. There is no cure for HIV /AIDS, but there are medications that can dramatically slow disease progression.

HIV destroys CD4 cells –a specific type of white blood cell that plays a large role in helping your body fight disease. Your immune system weakens as more CD4 cells are killed. You can have an HIV infection for years before it progress to AIDS. People infected with HIV progress to AIDS when CD4 count falls below 200 or they experience an AIDS –defining complication such as – pneumocystis pneumonia,

tuberculosis, toxoplasmosis, cytomegalovirus.

Symptoms of HIV:- some people develop HIV symptoms shortly after being infected .but it usually takes more than 10 years

There are several stages of HIV disease. The first HIV symptoms may include swollen glands in the throat, armpit, or groin .other early HIV symptoms include slight fever, headaches, fatigue, and muscle aches. These symptoms may last for only a few weeks .then there are usually no HIV symptoms for many years. That is why it can be hard to know if you have HIV.

Symptoms of AIDS: - AIDS symptoms appear in the most advanced stage of HIV disease .in addition to a badly damaged immune system, a person with AIDS may also have –

- Thrush –a thick, whitish coating of tongue or mouth that is caused by a yeast infection and some times accompanied by a sore throat.

- Severe or recurring vaginal yeast infections.
- Chronic pelvic inflammatory disease.
- Severe and frequent infections.
- Periods of extreme and unexplained tiredness that may be combined with headaches, lightheadedness, or dizziness.
- Quick loss of more than 10 pounds of weight that is not due to increased physical activity or dieting.
- Long period of frequent diarrhea.
- Frequent fever or night sweats.
- Swelling or hardening of glands located in the throat, armpit or groin.
- Periods of persistent, deep dry coughing.
- Increasing shortness of breath.
- The appearance of discoloured or purplish growth on the skin or inside the mouth.
- Frequent or unusual skin rashes.
- Severe numbness or pain in the hands or feet, the loss of muscle control and reflex, Paralysis or loss of muscular strength.
- Confusion, personality change or decreased mental abilities.

HIV is transmitted in several ways-

1. Having vaginal or anal intercourse without a condom with someone who has HIV/AIDS.
2. Sharing needles or syringes with someone who has HIV/AIDS. Being deeply punctured with a needle or surgical instrument contaminated with HIV
3. Getting HIV infected blood, semen or vaginal secretions into open wounds or sores.
4. Babies born to women with HIV/AIDS can get HIV from their mothers during birth or from breast feeding.

HIV is not transmitted by simple casual contact such as kissing drinking glasses or hugging.

Prevention:

There are many way you can protect yourself from HIV. The surest way is to abstain from sexual intercourse and from sharing needles and ‘works’ if you use steroids hormone, or other drugs , never share needles, get into a needle exchange program. Be sure to disinfect the needles you use. Don’t share personal items that may have blood on them. This includes tooth brushes, razors, needles for piercing or tattooing, and blades for cutting or scarring.

Safer sex and HIV:

Use a new condom every time you have anal or vaginal sex. Women can use a female condom. Use only water –based lubricant .oil based lubricants can weaken condoms and cause them to break. During oral sex use a condom, dental dam- a piece of medical grade latex or plastic wrap.

Tell your sexual partner if you have HIV. It's important to tell anyone with whom you had sex that you are HIV positive. Your partners need to know their HIV status so that they do not infect others.

If you are pregnant, get medical care right away. If you are HIV positive, you may pass the infection to your baby. But if you receive treatment during pregnancy n cut your baby's risk by as much as two thirds.

Aims:

1. Addresses the lack of knowledge about HIV prevention and treatment.
2. Through educational events increase levels of HIV/AIDS awareness and gender based violence.

3. Increase care and support and increasing freedom of discussion about HIV management.
4. Prevention of mother to child transmission at the family level.

Method:-

The data were collected through survey method with the help of schedules and questionnaire along with this other sources are books ,journal ,annual reports etc. 200 respondents were taken as sample from different age groups and socio-economic status from different district of Bihar. The selected district are - Sitamarhi, East Champaran, Khagaria, Purnea, Kishanganj, West Champaran, Madhubani, Muzaffarpur.

Table 1. – This table shows the district prevalence rate of HIV.

Prevalence rate	Percentage (%)
Sitamarhi	3.70%
East Champaran	2.28%
Khagaria	1.89%
Purnea	1.81%
Kishanganj	1.52%
West Champaran	1.26%
Madhubani	1.07%
Muzaffarpur	1.07%

National rate-0.9% ; state rate- 0.53%

Table 2 :- Data showing statistic analysis of people affected with HIV caused by HIV spreading factors (no. of respondents -200)

Spreading factor	No. of people affected	Sex		% of people affected	
		Male	Female	% male	%Female
Unsafe sex	94	63	31	31.5	15.5
Sharing HIV contaminated needles	38	30	8	15	4
Getting HIV infected blood	25	12	13	6	6.5
Babies from HIV infected mother	43	23	20	11.5	10

Outcomes:-

Bihar is sitting on the time bomb of AIDS epidemic. It is revealed by recent survey which shows that the HIV prevalence rate in Bihar is about five times higher than what was believed to be and eight populous districts in the state are the grip of HIV epidemic.

The survey conducted by Bihar State AIDS Control Society in all 38 districts in July 2005 and Dec. 2005 have found the rate to be 0.53% . Most of the people detected are in the age group of 25-40 yrs. High prevalence rate is due to high migration rate , due to lack of unemployment most men in rural Bihar migrate to Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, Maharashtra , and other states to work as laborers and spread the infection to their wives in the villages. BSACS believes that the rate at which the infection is spreading very soon will cross the 1% of

prevalence rate. People who have HIV are feeling shy to discuss about their condition, because of this they are not getting proper treatment.

Suggestion:-

Having HIV is unlikely to mean that you have to make drastic change in your diet.-it is important to get enough nutrients to help you stay well. People can live healthy with HIV by adopting good nutrition, quitting smoking, stopping illicit drug use, getting moderate exercise, practicing safer sex, emotional wellbeing and mental health.

A healthy diet for someone living with HIV is one that is rich in whole grains, low fat dairy products, protein, and lots of fresh fruits and vegetables. Include multivitamins, especially B12 and zinc, wherever possible. Try to cut out fried foods and sugary drinks as much as you can.

If you are using illegal drugs such as cocaine, heroin, or methamphetamines, seeks treatment for your addiction. Sharing needles to use such drugs can leave you vulnerable to other infection such as hepatitis, and that may lead to more rapid progression of HIV to AIDS. So, do not share needles with others.

Being physically active three to six times a week can help to improve your mood and your outlook as well as improve your overall quality of life. The benefits of exercise include fighting HIV symptoms of appetite loss and nerve pain, and reducing the risk of other chronic disease such as diabetes, heart disease, and osteoporosis.

Quitting smoking removes a significant contributor to lung infections.

Practicing safer sex –you should always use a new latex condom whenever you do

engage in sex. This will protect your partner from HIV infection and will protect you from sexually transmitted disease (STDs) that can complicate your health status.

Taking your medications as prescribed and visiting your doctor often. Taking medication is important because it will reduce the risk that HIV will become drug resistant and it will also give your body the best chance at keeping the virus under control.

It is important to recognize that there are things you can do to look after your emotional wellbeing. Supports from friends and family can be very helpful.

Making these changes in your life will help you stay healthier longer, even with HIV/AIDS.

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