

Introduction

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is a virus that attacks the body's immune system. Without treatment, it can lead to AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome). The virus spreads through direct contact with specific bodily fluids—blood, semen, vaginal fluids, rectal fluids, and breast milk—from a person with a detectable viral load. Most people who get HIV get it through sex or sharing needles, syringes, or other drug injection equipment. While infection is instant, acute symptoms typically appear 2-4 weeks later. The window period for testing is 4-6 weeks (up to 90 days for full accuracy).

Case Study

Alex is 35 years old and is married with two children (aged 3 and the other 1 month). He has been a Truck driver for the past seven years, and most of the time he is away from home with work. During his annual leave, he visited his GP due to persistent fever, weight loss, and chronic diarrhoea for 2 months. His GP is very concerned, as last year he visited him with fatigue, night sweats, and recurrent oral ulcers. He also reported multiple episodes of chest infections. Despite taking antibiotics, symptoms persisted. After some tests, Alex has now been tested HIV positive.

Questions for discussion

- What are the main approaches and strategies that could be used to **measure** an outbreak of HIV/ AIDS?
- What are the main approaches and strategies that could be used to **monitor** an outbreak of HIV/ AIDS?
- What are the main approaches and strategies that could be used to **control** an outbreak of HIV/ AIDS?
- Identify some **factors** that may influence the health and well-being of individuals affected by HIV/AIDS. What health education information will you give to the community to raise awareness of this disease?

As this is a discussion, you will be awarded a mark based on the knowledge, understanding, and skills that you demonstrate during your talk and discussion. You may be asked questions to clarify any points you make as part of this. Your work must be underpinned by researched facts and data that show your research skills and understanding of the key points that you have included.