

## BE INFORMED

**“When the beat of the drum changes, so must the step of the dance.”**  
**African Proverb**

This project provides individual and group HIV education where **CONFIDENTIALITY** is strictly protected.

In HIV education, a state trained counselor will provide instruction about HIV, help you explore your personal risk for HIV, help you identify what actions you can personally take to protect yourself and possible obstacles you might face as you begin to change some of your behaviors. They will help you develop a risk reduction plan that will work for you.

**INDIVIDUAL HIV EDUCATION** – means sitting down with a trained counselor one-on-one and talking in private about HIV/AIDS and how you can protect yourself.

**GROUP HIV EDUCATION** – means sitting down with a group of people to talk with a counselor about HIV/ADS

**ALL SERVICES PROVIDED THROUGH  
THE ECDC/ HIV/AIDS  
Health Promotion and Education Project  
ARE FREE AND AVAILABLE  
TO ALL AFRICANS!**

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

**“To the man who has only a hammer in his tool kit, every problem looks like a nail.”**  
**African Proverb**

Often times, people unknowingly increase their risk or don't get the help they need on time due to lack of information about resources available to Africans in America. To find out more about HIV related services contact::

Protect Yourself,  
Protect Your  
Community



## What is the Real risk of HIV infection among Africans in America?

Do Africans have to worry about becoming HIV+ in America? Yes they do. Africans and people from other minority groups in America have a greater risk for becoming HIV+ compared to whites. According to the Centers for Disease Control, people of African descent, including those that came recently and African-Americans, account for 50% of new HIV infections in the U.S.

## What can Africans do to prevent HIV infection?

### KNOW THE FACTS

**“Knowledge is light, ignorance is darkness.”  
African Proverb**

The term “AIDS” stands for **A**cquired **I**mmunodeficiency **S**ndrome. People who have AIDS have trouble fighting off other diseases that cause people to get sick.

AIDS is caused by the **H**uman **I**mmunodeficiency **V**irus (HIV). This virus causes very important parts of the body and brain to not work properly.

HIV is found in blood, semen, vaginal secretions and other body fluids of a person who is infected with HIV. HIV is spread by sexual contact, needle sharing, or rarely, through transfused blood or its components. HIV may also be passed on from an HIV+ mother to her baby during pregnancy, birth, or through breast feeding.



### RISK OF HIV IS INCREASED BY:

- ◆ Having vaginal or anal sex without a latex condom.
- ◆ Having oral sex without a latex condom or other latex barrier.
- ◆ Sharing needles or equipment to pierce, tattoo, or inject drugs.
- ◆ Having unprotected sex with more than one partner.

HIV is not spread by casual contact such as hugging and shaking hands, etc.

### GET TESTED

**“Because of his double identity, the bat never got a burial.” African Proverb**

As with many other diseases there is no single test for diagnosing HIV or AIDS. There is a test for detecting antibodies (things in the blood that fight disease) to HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Presence of antibodies means that a person is HIV+ and is can pass HIV to others.

### PROTECT YOURSELF

**“In your good times, prepare for bad times and in your bad times, prepare for good times.”  
African Proverb**

Be selective about whom you choose to have sex with. The more partners you have the greater your chance of becoming infected with HIV.

Avoid sex with persons whose HIV status is unknown to you and those who share needles or equipment to inject drugs, tattoo or body pierce.

Latex condoms, when used consistently and correctly, are highly effective in preventing the transmission of HIV. They should always be used during oral, vaginal and anal sex to prevent secretions from your partner to enter your body.

Use water based lubricants to prevent tears in skin or condoms during sex. Do not use petroleum jelly or other oil-based lubricants – they may cause latex condoms to break.

Use the female condom. A condom that women insert into their vagina in the same way that men put condoms on their penis.