



Theme 9: Reproductive Health and HIV Prevention

Introduction

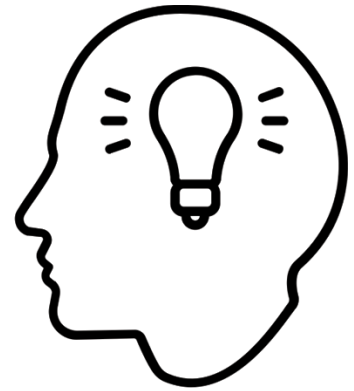
- Emphasizes on personal hygiene and awareness on symptoms of RTI and ways to prevent
- Learners demonstrate comfort in sharing concerns about their reproductive health and in accessing services without shame and guilt
- Understanding vulnerability of adolescents and women to HIV
- Information on prevention and services for testing counselling and treatment of HIV/ AIDS
- Countering myths and misconceptions related HIV/AIDS



Activity 1: Personal Hygiene and RTIs

Learning Outcomes

- Describes ways to maintain genital hygiene
- Explains symptoms and ways to prevent RTIs



Case studies

Case Study 3

Video

Kalai has been feeling uncomfortable for some days now. About 10 days back he had noticed painful blisters around different parts of his body. He could not discuss it with anyone and the pain has been increasing and so is his discomfort. He feels he should get it checked but is not sure where to go.

Let's watch the video

Case studies

Case Study 1

Video

John studies in Class VIII. For the last few days, he has been having persistent itching in his private area. He also notices blisters there. This makes him a little apprehensive. When John asks his elder brother to guide him, he makes fun of him and asks him to visit the 'quack' (unqualified practitioner), who sits in a tent in the market.

Points for discussion

1. *What do you think is happening to John?*
2. *What do you think about John's elder brother's response?*
3. *What could John have done to prevent the persistent itching?*
4. *What should John do to resolve his problem now?*

Case Study 2

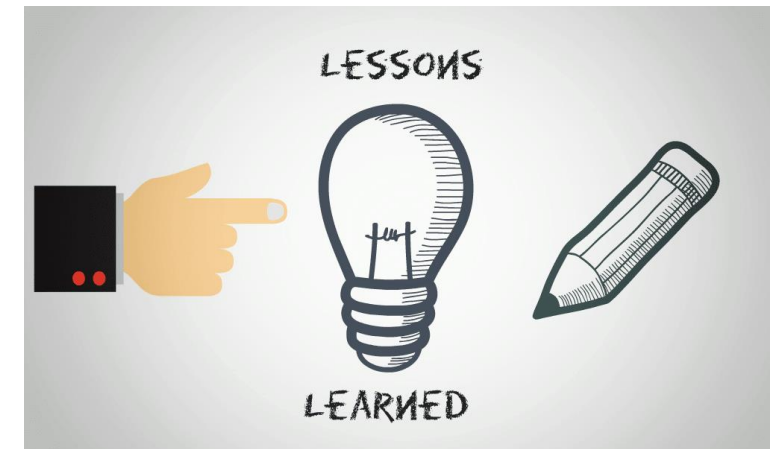
Nisha is not careful about practicing personal hygiene. Over a period of time, she has developed rashes in her private area and experiences a lot of itching. She is feeling very uncomfortable but is not able to share her problem with anyone. She is not sure who she can talk to about her problem.

Points for discussion

1. *What do you think is happening to Nisha?*
2. *What could be the reasons for Nisha's reluctance to share her problem?*
3. *What could Nisha have done to prevent the rashes and itching?*
4. *What can Nisha do to resolve her problem?*

Summary of discussions

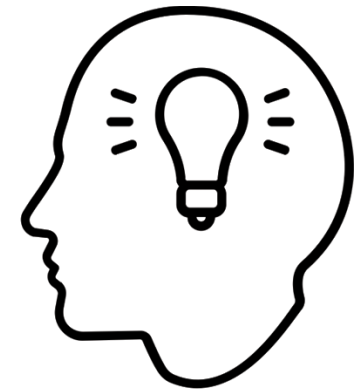
- Do Not neglect any discomfort / abnormality associated with any part of their body.
- Most RTIs are easily treated and cured, if diagnosed early.
- Maintaining personal hygiene is the most important way to prevent RTIs.
- No shame associated with RTI; immediate medical help should be sought from a qualified doctor.
- RTIs can be treated with medicines. It is important to complete the prescribed dosage even if the symptoms improve.



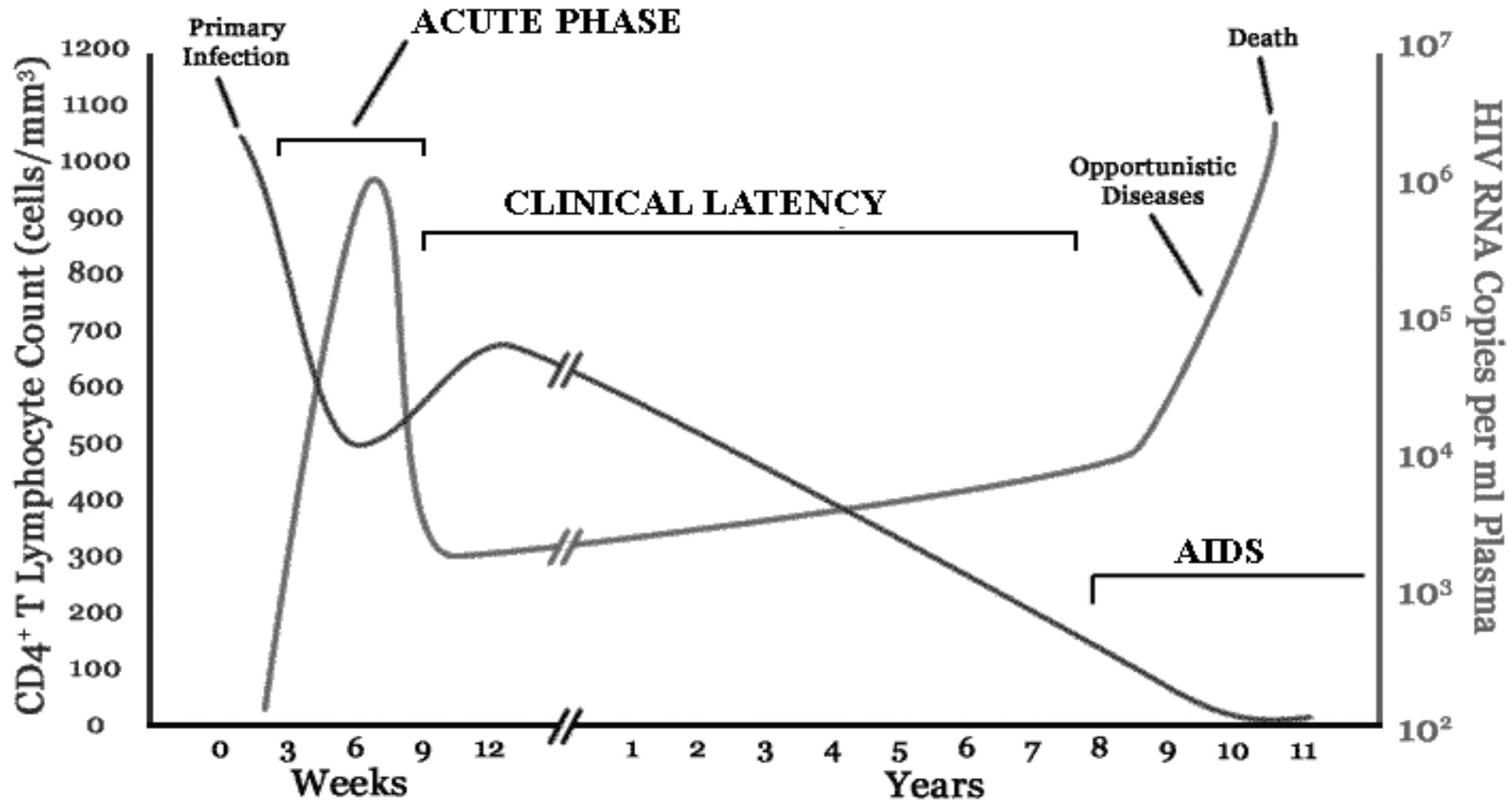
Activity-2: Talking About HIV

Learning Outcomes

- Explains the meaning of HIV
- Explains the impact of HIV on the immune system
- Explains ways of testing for HIV and AIDS



Time Evolution of HIV infection



Summary of discussions

- HIV is a virus, which damages the immune system of the body and a weak immune system is not able to protect the body from various infections.
- AIDS is the condition of weakened immune system of the body caused by the HIV.
- HIV can spread through physical relations with an infected person, use of HIV infected needles/razors,, transfusion of HIV contaminated blood or from HIV positive mother to her child. Avoiding these can prevent HIV infection.
- HIV infection is preventable, and each person has the right to protect themselves against HIV.
- HIV does not discriminate. It can infect people from any background, age or gender.



Activity-3: Vulnerability of women and adolescents to HIV

Learning Outcomes

- Explains vulnerability of adolescents and women to HIV
- Describes the services for testing, counselling and treatment of HIV and AIDS



Case studies

Case Study 1 **Video**

Seventeen-year-old, Sumitra is in Class XI. She did very well in her Class X board exams. She also bagged the ‘Soulful Singing’ award last year. She was a strong team player in the school’s kho-kho team. She was recognised and respected at home and in school. Her classmates nominated her as the Class Representative. Sumitra is happy to be at the centre of so much appreciation. However, recently, she feels bogged down by the weight of so many expectations from everyone. When she tries to refuse something that she feels she does not have the time or energy to handle, someone always says, “Come on Sumitra, you can do it! We are banking on you!” She does not know who to confide in and is much stressed. She comes across an advertisement promising a ‘magic injectable drug’ that increases energy and stamina several fold. Sumitra is very tempted to try it out and meet everyone’s expectations.

- 1. Will the ‘magic injectable drug’ help Sumitra resolve her problems?*
- 2. What are the possible risks for Sumitra in this case, especially in the context of HIV?*
- 3. What advice would you give Sumitra as a friend?*

Case Study 2

Fifteen-year-old Ravi is troubled by his parents' arguments at home. His parents do not spend much time with him and he feels neglected and ignored. As a result, he stays out of the house for long hours. He hangs out with a group of older boys who engage in risky behaviour. Ravi at times feels a little uneasy with their behaviour. However, he feels that his parents do not care and he has no other friends. He continues spending time with the older boys. One day, this group decides to visit a sex worker. Ravi is uncomfortable but not able to think for himself, Ravi decides to go along with them.

- 1. What made Ravi go along with the older boys?*
- 2. Will Ravi's behaviour solve his problems? Please give reasons for your response.*
- 3. What are the possible risks for Ravi in this case, especially in the context of HIV?*
- 4. What advice would you give Ravi as a friend?*

Case studies

Video

Case Study 3

Rita is 25 years old and wants to get married. After searching for a suitable partner, Rita and her parents identify Rohit as her future husband. Her parents do a lot of background check about Rohit, by talking to colleagues at work, neighbours, finding out family connections etc. and are satisfied with the information they obtain. During these discussions, Rita remembers her HIV class in school and wants to ensure there is no such risk with Rohit. She asks her parents to get Rohit's HIV test report as well. Her parents are a little surprised by the unusual request.

- 1. What do you think about Rita's request for Rohit's HIV report?*
- 2. Should Rita or her parents be offended if Rohit asks for Rita's HIV report?*
- 3. Do you think a potential partner's HIV report would be useful? Why/why not?*

Summary of discussions

- Engaging in risky behaviour as experimenting with drugs or irresponsible sexual behaviour is no solution to any problem.
- Young people may be afraid to find out their HIV status due to fear of exposure of activities .Ignorance of HIV status may further spread HIV.
- Social and economic factors (lack of education, low self-esteem and economic dependence) also are the cause for women's vulnerability since she may not be able to negotiate with partners for safe sexual behaviour.
- Woman has the right to ask the person she is marrying, to be tested for HIV and show her the report.



Activity-4: Quiz on HIV

Learning Outcomes

- Explains ways to protect self and others from HIV
- Counters myths and misconceptions related to HIV and AIDS



S.No	Question
1	All people with HIV have AIDS
2	HIV is transmitted through touching, hugging or sharing food
3	HIV is transmitted by mosquito bites or through other insects.
4	A person can get HIV infection by donating blood.
5	A person can get infected by HIV by sharing needles with someone who has HIV.
6	It is impossible to protect oneself from becoming infected with HIV.
7	You can know a person is infected with HIV by looking at him/her.
8	There is a cure for HIV and AIDS.
9	HIV positive students should be expelled from school as they may prove dangerous to other students and teachers sitting in the same classrooms.
10	If one member of a family has HIV, all other members will definitely have HIV.
11	HIV can be transmitted from a pregnant woman to her baby.
12	In India, there is a law that protects the rights of HIV positive persons.
13	There is a helpline to access information about HIV, and related services.
14	A person infected with HIV can lead a normal life.

Summary of discussions

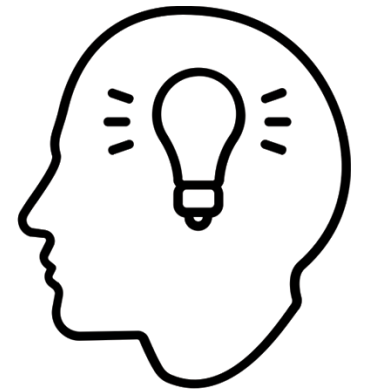
- Most people have heard a great deal about HIV/ AIDS, but are confused by incorrect information about its transmission.
- Many people do not believe that HIV can affect them. Others believe that they cannot avoid HIV infection. Both these thought processes can encourage risky behaviour.
- Protect oneself from HIV by avoiding unsafe physical relations, not reusing needles, accessing registered blood banks and taking medical help during pregnancy to avoid transmission to the baby from an HIV infected mother.
- It is important to challenge misconceptions and spread awareness about HIV /AIDS to prevent people from getting infected by HIV and put an end to discrimination arising from these misconceptions.



Activity-5: Leading life positively

Learning Outcomes

- Recognizes that people living with HIV and AIDS should not be discriminated against
- Explains the role of healthy lifestyle and support in enabling HIV positive person to live a fulfilling



Story

Rahul lost his father when he was just a child. He's a young man now and lives with his mother. He works at a senior position in a factory. Sonal is a bright young girl working in a science research laboratory. She resides in a hostel close to Rahul's place. They become good friends and want to get married.

But there are problems. Rahul is HIV+. It was detected during a routine health checkup conducted in the factory where he works. The Managing Director of his factory has taken the decision to remove him because of his HIV status.

Sonal too has a problem. She was in love with Vikram, a colleague in her place of work and that relationship resulted in her pregnancy. Vikram went abroad a couple of months back and soon wrote back to her ending their relationship. Sonal went into depression. That's when she became friends with Rahul. Rahul does not know that Sonal is pregnant and Sonal does not know of Rahul's HIV status. Dr Khurana consulted by both knows the truth about them, but he doesn't divulge their respective problems to one another for ethical reasons. Rahul's mother is excited to know about his plan to marry Sonal. Although she is aware of his HIV+ status, she persuades him to marry Sonal as early as possible so that they may have a baby soon.

Video

Points for discussion

- 1. What do you feel about Rahul's mother's position?*
- 2. Is the Managing Director's action justified?*
- 3. Did Dr. Khurana take the right decision?*
- 4. What kind of persons do Rahul, Sonal and Vikram seem to be?*

Summary of discussions

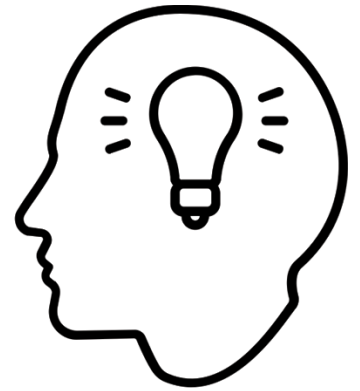
- Illegal to test for HIV without consent.
- HIV status can't be disclosed without the individual's permission.
- HIV positive status cannot be the basis for expulsion from job or school.
- People living with HIV and AIDS have the right to live free of stigma and discrimination. Each one of us needs to ensure that they are treated with respect and dignity like any other person.
- A healthy lifestyle, nutritious food, counselling, following the doctor's advice, positive attitude, care and support from family and community and access to proper treatment can help a HIV positive person live a long and productive life.



Activity-6: Responsible Sexual Behaviour

Learning Outcomes

- Explains importance of equal and respectful relationships between partners
- Explains consequences of adolescent pregnancy and ways to avoid it
- Explains services that adolescents can access for good reproductive health



Case studies

Case Study 1

Malavika just turned 17 and is going to be married soon. Her friend jokingly informed her that she will have to become pregnant soon after marriage. Malavika is quite upset with this information. She is not sure if she is ready to have a child at the moment.

Points for discussion

- 1. Is Malavika old enough to be married?*
- 2. What could be the possible consequences of having a child at this age?*

Case Study 2

Rita and Tejas got married recently and are happy with their marriage. Rita works for a community service organisation and Tejas runs a shop. They do not want a child for some time. They have seen some couples have an unwanted pregnancy and want to avoid any such situation.

Points for discussion

- 1. What options do Rita and Tejas have to follow through on the decision they have made?*
- 2. What services can they assess to avoid an unwanted pregnancy?*

Case studies

Case Study 3: Child Marriage

- Adolescent pregnancy is a consequence of child marriage (before 18 years of age).
- Early pregnancy has many harmful effects on health and life. It adversely affects the health of both the young mother and her child, since her body may not be ready to nourish a child till she is older.
- Besides this, as discussed in the child marriage activity, child marriage and early pregnancy can have negative consequences on opportunities for education, careers, economic productivity, socio-economic independence of adolescents and mental health.

Case Study 4: Pregnancy services and products

- To avoid pregnancy, consult with a health care provider (ANM, nurse, or doctor), who can explain various options and enable them to make pointed and responsible decisions. Various contraceptive facilities are available at Asha, Anganwadi workers, chemists and all major health centers.

Points for discussion

- 1. What responsible behaviour can prevent an unwanted pregnancy?*
- 2. What are the consequences of pregnancy among adolescents?*
- 3. Which services can one access in case of a reproductive health issue or concern?*

Summary of discussions

- Responsible behaviour is essential to maintain good health.
- Establishing equal and respectful relationship with one's partner. This includes being assertive about one's choices and body and respecting the partner's choices.
- Early pregnancy can have a negative impact on the mother and child. This can be addressed by
 - ✓ Avoiding child marriage (marriage before the age of 18 and 21 amongst girls and boys, respectively).
 - ✓ Use of contraception to avoid early and unintended pregnancy.
- Accessing reproductive health services at nearest HWC* for accurate knowledge and services



Thank You