

MISCONCEPTIONS



about HIV



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There are many misconceptions or misunderstandings about HIV due to the lack of information. It is also considered shameful, taboo, or a scary topic to discuss. Let us tackle some of the misconceptions about HIV so that we can make safer and informed decisions.



MISCONCEPTION #1: IT IS OBVIOUS WHEN PEOPLE HAVE HIV. THEY WOULD LOOK DIRTY, SICK, OR BE TOO FLIRTY, HORNY, OR PERSISTENT IN HAVING SEX.

FACT:


People with HIV do not have just one appearance. It is impossible to just use your eyes in identifying whether a person has HIV or not. It has nothing to do with a person's looks, mannerisms, or body odor. Anyone can have HIV so everyone should get tested.

MISCONCEPTION #2: I WOULD NEVER GET HIV BECAUSE MY PARTNERS ALWAYS LOOK CLEAN.

FACT:

Again, a person's appearance has no relation to HIV. Anyone can have HIV, so everyone should get tested.





MISCONCEPTION #3: I WOULD NEVER GET HIV BECAUSE I DON'T ALLOW MY PARTNER TO EJACULATE INSIDE ME.

FACT:

It is still possible for HIV to be transmitted through a person's blood, and not just through semen. If a person has mouth sores or any wounds, the virus can enter through those.

MISCONCEPTION #4: I WOULD NEVER GET HIV BECAUSE MY PARTNER SAID THAT HE DOESN'T FEEL SICK.

FACT:

Whether or not a person feels sick has nothing to do with HIV. Worldwide, one in seven (1 in 7) people with HIV do not know they already have it. HIV Testing is the only way to confirm whether or not a person has HIV. It is okay to get tested even if a person does not feel sick.



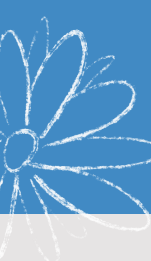
MISCONCEPTION #5: GETTING TESTED FOR HIV IS EXPENSIVE.

FACT:

There are **free HIV tests** in designated testing hubs.

MISCONCEPTION #6: GETTING TESTED FOR HIV IS PAINFUL.


FACT:



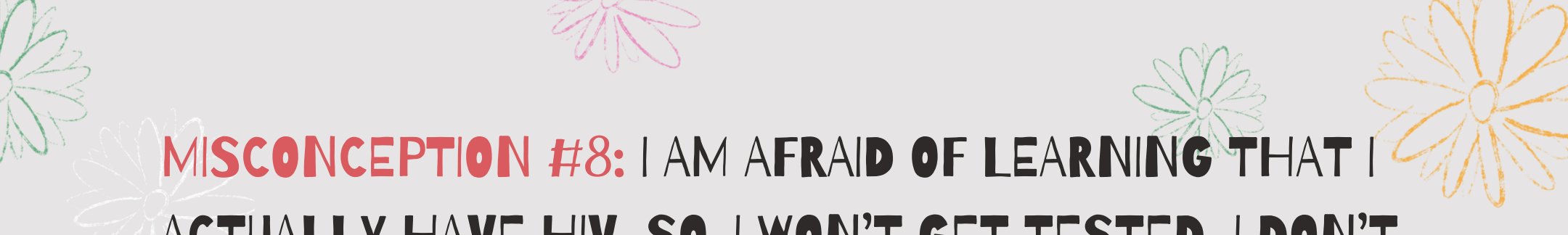
There are different ways of testing for HIV antibodies/antigens, like through a **simple finger prick, testing the saliva, or testing blood drawn from the veins.**

MISCONCEPTION #7: OTHER PEOPLE WILL FIND OUT IF I BECOME HIV POSITIVE.

FACT:




Philippine law states that the testing, records, and results of HIV testing should remain confidential. Your HIV test results and identity should not be publicized to anyone.




MISCONCEPTION #8: I AM AFRAID OF LEARNING THAT I ACTUALLY HAVE HIV. SO, I WON'T GET TESTED. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'LL DO WITH MY LIFE IF IT TURNS OUT THAT I'M HIV-POSITIVE.

FACT:

It is a lot scarier to be uncertain if you have HIV or not. You will have peace of mind once you've confirmed your status – may it be negative or positive. There will be people like HIV counselors to guide and talk to you when you get tested. You may approach them if you have any concern. Emotional support and information services are available for people who undergo HIV testing. You do not need to bear the burden of your fears alone.



Antiretroviral therapy is available, and it suppresses the increase of the viral load of HIV in your body. It is possible to live a normal, healthy, and happy life even with HIV.






MISCONCEPTION #9: IF I HAVE HIV, I WON'T BE ABLE TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT BECAUSE IT'S ALREADY IN MY BODY.

FACT:

While it is true that HIV cannot be cured, there is something called **Antiretroviral Therapy (or ART)** that can help people who are HIV positive which curbs the spread of HIV in the body to live long, healthy, and normal lives. This is why it is good to regularly get tested for HIV to get started on ART, should you test positive for HIV. **Early intervention is much better for you in the long run.** Early intervention means getting tested within the first 6 months of being exposed to HIV.





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REMEMBER:

Anyone may get HIV, so everyone needs to get tested. With proper guidance, support, and early intervention, it is possible to live long, happy, healthy, and normal lives even with HIV.

There are many HIV testing hubs and clinics in various parts of the country.

You can check the links below to find out more about these hubs and clinics:

- [HIV treatment hubs in the Philippines](#)
- [LoveYourself](#)



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