

AIDS

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Definition:

Acquired immune deficiency syndrome or acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS or Aids) is a collection of symptoms and infections resulting from the specific damage to the immune system caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) in humans.

The late stage of the condition leaves individuals susceptible to opportunistic infections and tumors. Although treatments for AIDS and HIV exist to decelerate the virus' progression, there is currently no known cure.

History:

On June 5th, the CDC reports that in the period October 1980-May 1981, 5 young men, all active homosexuals, were treated for biopsy-confirmed Pneumocystis carinii pneumonia at 3 different hospitals in Los Angeles, California. Two of the patients died. All 5 patients had laboratory-confirmed previous or current cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection and candidal mucosal infection.

The term AIDS ("acquired immune deficiency syndrome") is used for the first time on July 27th 1982.

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Symptoms:

The symptoms of AIDS are primarily the result of conditions that do not normally develop in individuals with healthy immune systems. Most of these conditions are infections caused by bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites that are normally controlled by the elements of the immune system that HIV damages. Opportunistic infections are common in people with AIDS. HIV affects nearly every organ system. People with AIDS also have an increased risk of developing various cancers such as Kaposi's sarcoma, cervical cancer and cancers of the immune system known as lymphomas.

Prevention:

This disease can be prevented by avoiding sexual contact with infected people and using their personal items such as needles etc.

Treatment:

This is the main type of treatment for HIV or AIDS. It is not a cure, but it can stop people from becoming ill for many years. The treatment consists of drugs that have to be taken every day for the rest of someone's life. Antiretroviral treatment for HIV infection consists of drugs which work against HIV infection itself by slowing down the replication of HIV in the body.

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