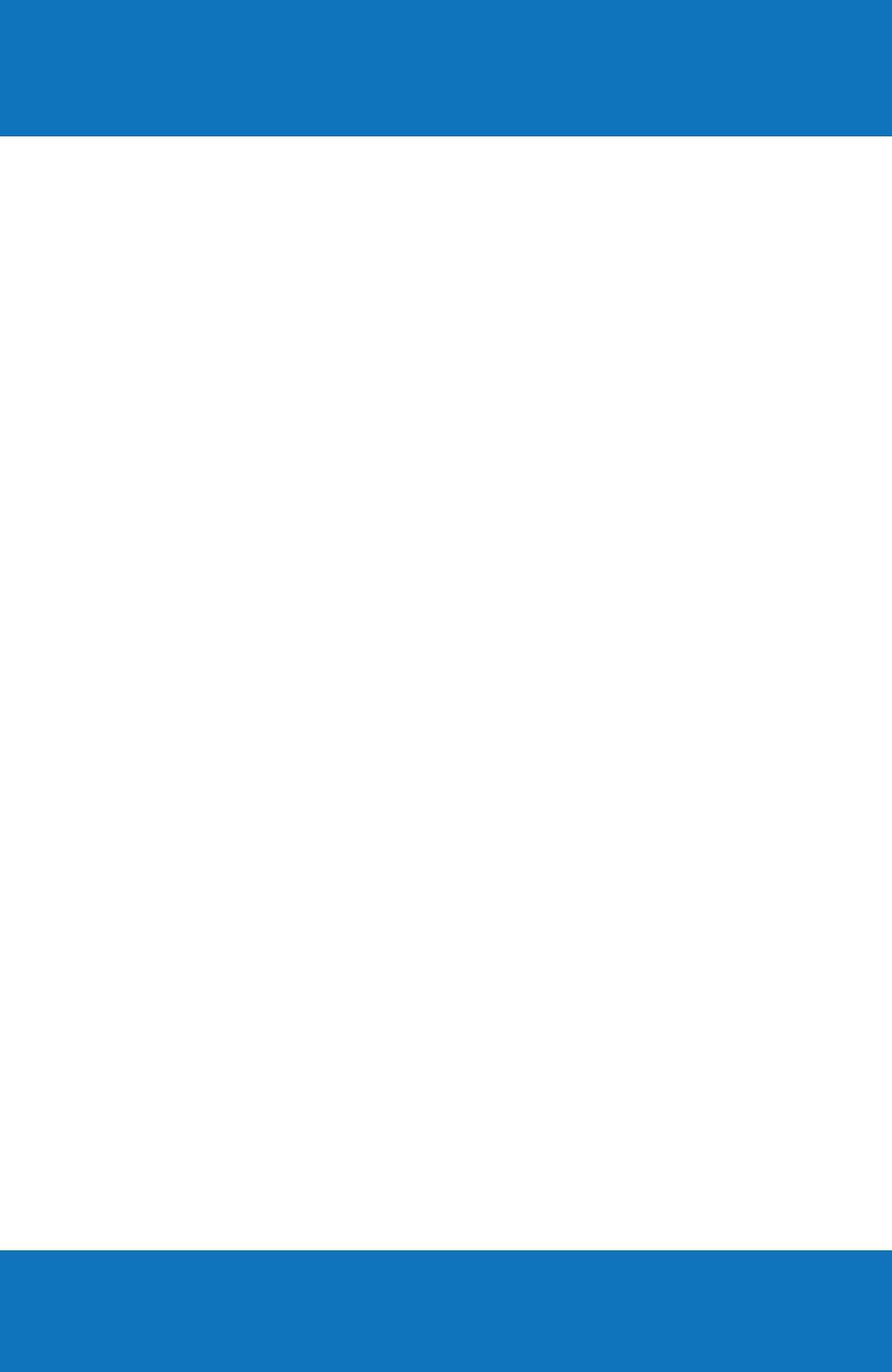




**COULD  
IT BE  
EARLY  
HIV?**



# COULD IT BE EARLY HIV?

## **Early/Acute**

Early HIV is the beginning stage of HIV, right after someone gets the virus. During early HIV, the virus is reproducing very rapidly and HIV can be easily passed to others through sex or sharing injection equipment. Early HIV is sometimes called acute HIV.

## **Signs and Symptoms of Acute/Early HIV**

- Sore throat
- Swollen glands
- Fever
- Rash
- Joint and muscle aches
- Diarrhea
- Tired feeling
- Tonsillitis
- Mouth sores

The signs and symptoms of acute HIV can begin 2 to 4 weeks before you can be diagnosed as living with HIV. Symptoms can last for just a few days or weeks.

The signs and symptoms of early HIV are similar to the signs and symptoms of many other common illnesses like the flu, colds, sore throat or mononucleosis.

## COULD IT BE EARLY HIV?

### Is it COVID-19, the flu or Early/Acute HIV?

The symptoms of early HIV and the flu are similar but not the same.

#### Flu and Early HIV Symptoms

Fever • Fatigue • Muscle aches  
Headaches • Sore throat • Swollen lymph nodes

If you have these symptoms you may have the flu:

#### COVID-19 or Flu Symptoms

Nasal congestion • Cough • Sneezing

Symptoms specific to Early/Acute HIV are:

#### Early HIV Symptoms

Rash • Mouth Sores

If you are not sure if you have the COVID-19, flu or early HIV, ask yourself the questions below. If your answer to two or more of these questions is yes, it could point to HIV rather than the flu.

- Is there a rash?
- Did you have sex without a condom or share injection equipment in the past few weeks?
- Do you have a new sexually transmitted infection?

## COULD IT BE EARLY HIV?

### **Testing for Acute HIV infection**

If you think you might have been exposed to HIV within the last 30 days and/or you have symptoms of early HIV, talk to your healthcare provider. Certain HIV tests can detect HIV as early as 7-10 days after an exposure took place. By talking with your healthcare provider about your symptoms and your recent risk for HIV, they can make sure you get the proper tests to detect early HIV.

### **Waiting for Test Results**

While waiting for your test results it is very important for you to know that if you have early HIV you can pass the virus to your partners. Until you know your test results you can minimize the risk of spreading HIV to others by:

- Abstaining from sex.
- If you have sex, use a condom every time.
- If you use drugs do not share needles or other drug paraphernalia.

### **Treatment of Early/Acute HIV infection**

- If you find out you have early HIV infection it is recommended that you start treatment as soon as possible. The earlier the better! Early treatment helps protect the immune system, and also reduces the chances that a person with HIV will pass the virus on to their partners.
- HIV treatment is highly effective, simple to take, and has few or no side effects.

# COULD IT BE EARLY HIV?

## For More Information on Acute HIV/HIV and AIDS:

### **New York State Department of Health:**

- Call 1-800-541-AIDS English
- 1-800-233-SIDA Spanish
- Call the New York State HIV/AIDS  
TDD Information Line at:  
1-800-638-5163

Or visit [www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/](http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/)

### **CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) National AIDS Hotline:**

- 1-800-342-2437 English
- 1-800-344-7432 Spanish

Or visit [www.cdc.gov/hiv](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv)

### **Healthline**

- [www.healthline.com/health/acute-hiv-infection](http://www.healthline.com/health/acute-hiv-infection)



