

Common Opportunistic Infections - Living with HIV, part 6

Opportunistic infections, also called OIs, are infections that occur more often in people with weakened immune systems. OIs are a risk for people living with HIV.

OIs tend to occur when CD4 cells, a type of blood cell that fights infection, falls to a very low level. Twenty infections have been identified as the most common OIs in the United States.

They are:

- **Candidiasis of the throat and lungs** - this is a fungal infection
- **Invasive cervical cancer**
- **Coccidioidomycosis** - a fungus that causes lung infection
- **Cryptococcosis** - a fungus that causes infection of the lungs, brain and body
- **Cryptosporidiosis** - a parasite that causes diarrhea
- **Cytomegalovirus** - a virus that can infect many parts of the body
- **HIV Encephalopathy** - a brain disorder that is a result of HIV infection.
- **Herpes simplex** - a common virus that causes severe infection in HIV infected persons
- **Histoplasmosis** - a fungus that causes lung infection
- **Isosporiasis** - a parasite that causes diarrhea and other symptoms
- **Kaposi's sarcoma** - a type of cancer
- **Lymphoma** - cancer of the lymph nodes
- **Tuberculosis** - a bacteria that causes lung infection
- **Mycobacterium avium complex** - a serious bacterial disease
- **Pneumocystis** - a fungus that causes lung infection
- **Repeated Pneumonia** - lung infections caused by many different germs
- **Progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy** - a virus that causes brain infection
- **Salmonella** - a bacteria that causes blood infection
- **Toxoplasmosis** - a parasite that causes brain infection
- **HIV Wasting syndrome** - involuntary loss of more than 10% of one's body weight



Be sure to get answers to any questions you have about HIV/AIDS. Your public health department, health care provider, and public library can help.



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