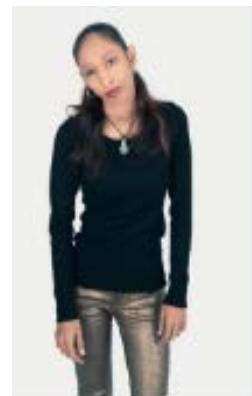


Women and HIV - Newly diagnosed with HIV, part 4



Both women and men need similar types of HIV care, but there are some important differences:

- Women often have gynecological conditions as a result of HIV infection. These can include difficult-to-treat vaginal yeast infections, pelvic inflammatory disease, and an increased likelihood of developing cervical cancer.
- Women may have concerns about current or future pregnancy and childbirth. It is best to talk with your provider about these concerns.
- Women who are diagnosed with HIV should have a Pap smear and a pelvic exam as soon as possible. They should have a follow-up Pap smear 6 months later.
- Women are less likely to develop Kaposi's Sarcoma, a type of cancer that can occur when an HIV infection has progressed to AIDS.
- Women are often diagnosed later in the stages of HIV infection, so they can be more susceptible to opportunistic infections. They are called Opportunistic Infections, or OIs, because they take the opportunity to attack you when your immune system is weak.
- Women often must be stronger advocates for themselves and their treatment when engaged in HIV care. Many times women face multiple barriers to care such as single parenthood, limited income, and social stigma or sense of shame about HIV.
- Women who no longer worry about getting pregnant may be less likely to use a condom and to practice safer sex. This increases their risk of HIV infection.



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.