

# Learning about HIV and STDS

*A Lesson Plan from Rights, Respect, Responsibility: A K-12 Curriculum  
Fostering respect and responsibility through age-appropriate sexuality education.*

## NSES ALIGNMENT:

**SH.5.CC.3** – Define STDs, including HIV, and clarify common myths about transmission.

**TARGET GRADE:** Grade 5,  
Lesson 3

**TIME:** 40 Minutes

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Newsprint/Board
- Markers/chalk
- Printout of Communicable/Non-communicable card sort
- Handout: “Facts about HIV, STDs and Other Communicable Diseases” –one per student
- “Facts about ... – Answer Key” one copy for the teacher

## ADVANCE PREPARATION FOR LESSON:

It is helpful for students to have a basic understanding of the human immune system and how it works, and the concept of germs. The teacher should also review [www.cdc.gov/std](http://www.cdc.gov/std) to make sure to be up to date on information about HIV and STDs. Finally, the teacher should also be prepared not to discuss explicit sexual situations but to refer a student with such a question to ask an adult family member.

Print one set of the Communicable/Non-Communicable card sort activity.

Tape the 3 signs up on the board in this order:

1. Communicable Diseases-Easy to Get
2. Communicable Diseases-Hard to Get
3. Non-Communicable Diseases

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Name which common diseases are communicable and which are non-communicable. [Knowledge]
2. Describe ways to avoid communicable diseases. [Knowledge]
3. Identify what to do if you encounter blood or hypodermic needles. [Knowledge/Skill]
4. Describe 2 ways that HIV and STDs are not transmitted.[Knowledge]

## PROCEDURE:

**STEP 1:** Say "Today we are going to learn the difference between communicable and non-communicable diseases, and ways to keep yourself safe. Communicable means contagious. Communicable diseases are diseases that one person can give to another; or get from someone else. Ask students to raise their hands and give examples of communicable diseases [some responses may include: the common cold, COVID-19, chicken pox]

Say “Communicable diseases are caused by tiny germs that are contagious. Not all diseases, however, are contagious”

“Non-communicable diseases are those that cannot be spread from one person to another.” Ask for examples of non-communicable diseases, or infections [Some responses may include: appendicitis, an infected finger, asthma, cancer]  
(5 minutes)

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**STEP 2:** Tape 3 signs up on the board: Communicable Diseases-Easy to Get, Communicable Diseases-Hard to Get, Non-Communicable Diseases. Tell students you are going to show cards with different diseases people may get and they should tell you whether they are communicable or not. Example:

- Can you get a cold from someone? (YES) Is it easy to get? (Yes) Put in "Easy to Get"
- Can you get allergies from someone? (NO) Put in Non-Communicable
- Go through all the Communicable/Non-Communicable cards (10 minutes)

Communicable Diseases

Easy to Get

COVID-19  
Common Cold  
Cold Sore  
Head Lice  
Chicken Pox

Communicable Diseases

Hard to Get

HIV  
STDs

Non-communicable

Diseases

Cancer  
Asthma  
Allergies  
Diabetes

**STEP 3:** Ask "How do you keep yourself and other people safe from easy to get Communicable Diseases, such as, things that get passed through the air?" [examples: Wear a mask. Stay home when you are sick. Wash your hands. Get vaccinated (for COVID, flu, chicken pox, etc). Don't share food or lip balm (that's been in or on your mouth)]

"We don't really control whether we get things like asthma or cancer. So we just try to keep our bodies healthy, and see a doctor when we get sick."

Ask students if they have any questions about whether other illnesses are communicable (contagious). Respond to students' questions by giving the correct answer and then explaining why. If you are unsure, tell the student you are unsure and that you will find out and let them know.

*(3 minutes)*

**STEP 4:** Say "Today I want to talk about two things that are communicable - HIV and a group of diseases called STDs. HIV and STDs are hard to get communicable diseases.

Ask students what have they heard of HIV. As you write "humanimmunodeficiency" on the board, say, "'HIV' stands for 'Human Immunodeficiency Virus.' That's a big name, so let's break it down a bit. 'Human' means it is a disease people get. You can't get it from a pet or give it to a pet. 'Immunodeficiency' means the disease attacks our body's immune system and makes it hard to fight off other germs. Virus describes the type of germ it is."

Then say, "STD stands for sexually transmitted diseases, which means that it's a disease that a person can pass through having sex with another person."

These two types of diseases are passed by having sex with someone who has it, being born to someone who has it, or coming in contact with the blood of someone who has it, for example by a needle that's been in someone who has it. HIV is in some body fluids, like blood, but not in others, like sweat, tears, saliva, or urine. Both HIV and STDs can be passed through blood, semen or vaginal fluids.

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Ask, what are ways to keep yourself and others safe from HIV and STDs?"

[examples: Don't have sex. Don't use a needle anywhere but a doctor's office. If you see a needle, don't touch it, call an adult. If you see blood that's not yours, don't touch it, call an adult]

Say "We can prevent some diseases by giving people vaccines. A vaccine is a shot that protects against getting a particular disease. Vaccines are available for some diseases but not all of them. People get vaccines for COVID, chicken pox, the flu, and many other. There is a vaccine for an STD called HPV, and another one for an STD called Hepatitis B. There is not a vaccine for HIV, but there are medicines that someone with HIV can get from their doctor that can keep them healthy." (5 minutes)

**STEP 5:** Distribute the handout, "Facts about HIV, STDs and Other Diseases" Have students work in pairs to complete the worksheet. Allow 8 minutes for students to do this. Once all have been completed, review the questions with the class. All answers are TRUE. For each question, provide the answer as well as an explanation for why it is true (See teacher's guide with explanations.) (15 minutes)

**STEP 6:** Ask students,

"Is it safe to hug someone with an STD?" [Yes - STDs are not transmitted this way]

"Is it safe to hug someone with cancer?" [Yes - Not Communicable]

"Is it safe to hug someone with COVID?" [No - Easy to Get - You can hug them when they don't have COVID anymore]

Conclude the lesson by saying "HIV and STDs can be serious, and are communicable, but you don't have to be afraid of someone that has them because they are not transmitted through casual contact like a cold is. To recap, how can you protect yourself and others from HIV and STDs?

[examples: Don't have sex. Don't use a needle anywhere but a doctor's office. If you see a needle, don't touch it, call an adult. If you see blood that's not yours, don't touch it, call an adult]

How can you protect yourself and others from easy to get communicable diseases like a cold, the flu, COVID?

[examples: Wear a mask. Stay home when you are sick. Wash your hands. Get vaccinated (for COVID, flu, chicken pox, etc). Don't share food or lip balm (that's been in or on your mouth)]

Great job everyone. (5 minutes)

### RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES AT CONCLUSION OF LESSON:

The worksheet "Facts about HIV, STDs and Other Diseases" is designed to assess all objectives.

Additionally, through class discussion, the teacher can further assess student understanding of disease transmission by their responses to ways they can safely interact with people.

**HOMEWORK:** None.

**Teacher's Note:** You can find out more about HIV and STDs at: [www.cdc.gov/std](http://www.cdc.gov/std) You can find out more about COVID-19 at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

**FACTS ABOUT HIV, STDS  
AND OTHER COMMUNICABLE DISEASES  
(TRUE OR FALSE)**

1. You can give someone a cold, the flu, or COVID-19 by sneezing or coughing on them .  
(True: these viruses are transmissible through the air, washing your hands and sneezing/caughing into your elbow are a good way to reduce the risk)
2. So far, there is no vaccine to prevent HIV.  
(True: There is a vaccine for 2 STDs: HPV & Hepatitis B and for many other contagious diseases such as the flu, COVID, measles, mumps, polio, etc)
3. Cancer and Diabetes are examples of diseases that are not contagious  
(True: Cancer and diabetes are not contagious)
4. HIV is a communicable (contagious) disease.  
(True: But it is not an easy infection to transmit)
5. You can get or transmit the common cold or cold sores from sharing a drink.  
(True: These viruses are found in saliva)
6. Used needles can contain diseases such as HIV and Hepatitis  
(True: If the needle has been used for drugs, medicines, tattooing or anything else, it can contain small amount of blood which can carry blood borne diseases, such as HIV and Hepatitis)
7. AIDS and HIV are two different things.  
(True: AIDS describes when a person with HIV gets sick because their immune system can no longer fight off infections. It can take years for a person with HIV to develop AIDS, if they ever do)
8. If you see a used needle or another person's blood, tell an adult immediately  
(True: Do not touch it, do not pick it up, even with gloves, it is not safe)
9. A cold sore is very common, and is also communicable.  
(True: if you or another person has a cold sore - on your lip or the outside of your mouth - avoid touching it, kissing on the lips, sharing lip balm or sharing anything that might touch it)
10. STD stands for Sexually Transmitted Disease, and is usually transmitted during some kind of sexual activity  
(True: Not having sex is a very effective way to avoid getting an STD. When people become sexually active - that is being a sexual relationship - it's a good idea to get tested for STDs)

**FACTS ABOUT HIV  
(TRUE OR FALSE)**

**Directions:** Write TRUE next to those statements that are true, and FALSE next to those statements that are false.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. You can give someone a cold, the flu, or COVID-19 by sneezing or coughing on them
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. So far, there is no vaccine to prevent HIV
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Cancer and Diabetes are examples of diseases that are not contagious
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. HIV is a communicable (contagious) disease.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. You can get or transmit the common cold or cold sores from sharing a drink.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Used needles can contain diseases such as HIV and Hepatitis
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. AIDS and HIV are two different things.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. If you see a used needle or another person's blood, tell an adult immediately
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. A cold sore is very common, and is also communicable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. STD stands for Sexually Transmitted Disease, and is usually transmitted during some kind of sexual activity

Communicable  
Diseases  
Easy to Get

Communicable  
Diseases  
Hard to Get

# Non- Communicable Diseases



# Sore throat



# HIV

# Head Lice



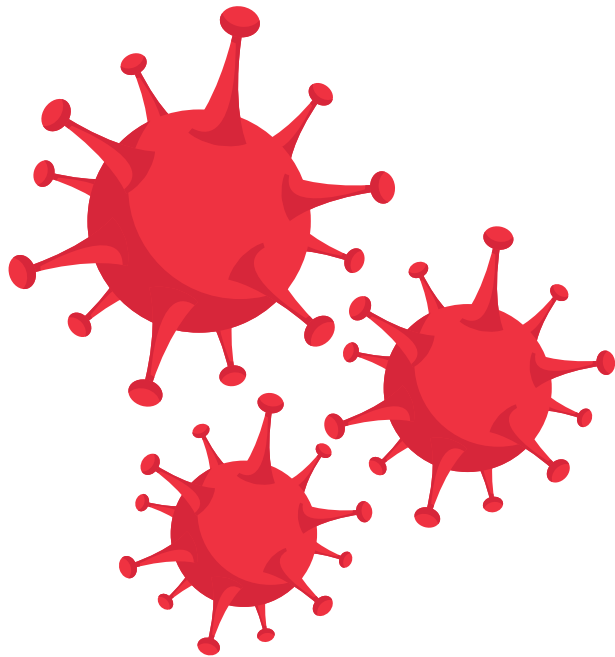
# Cancer

# Common cold



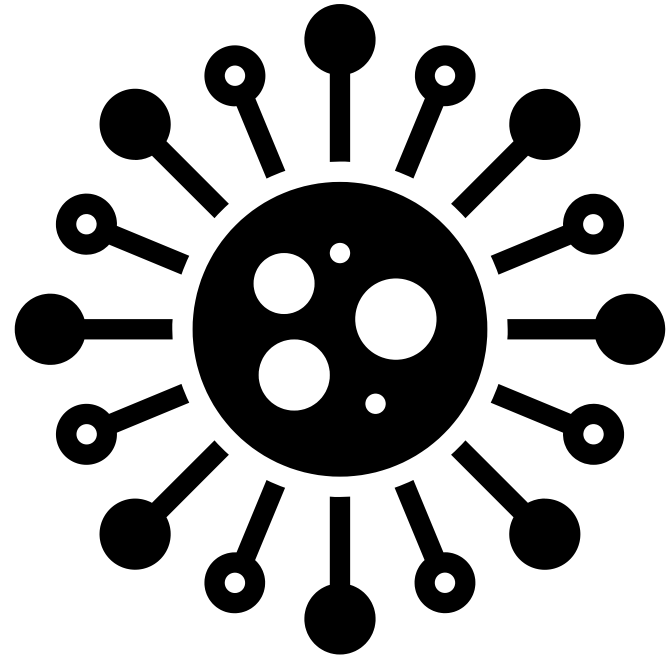
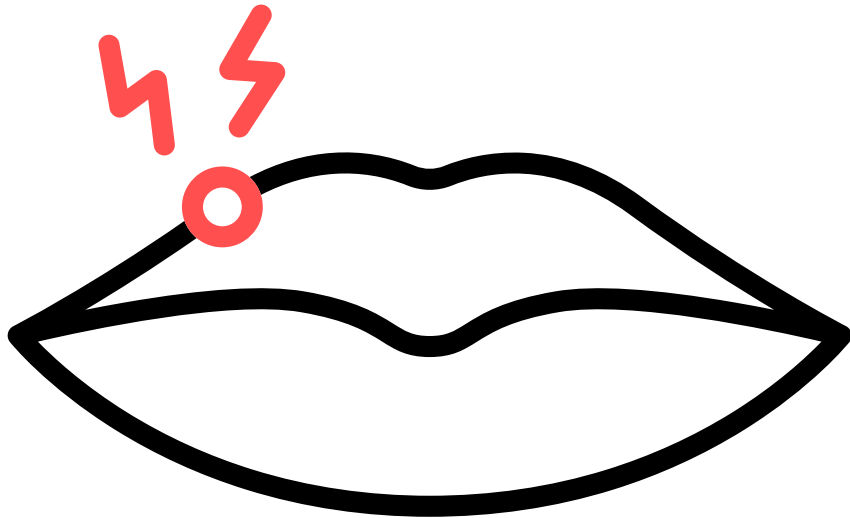
# Asthma

# COVID-19



# Diabetes

# Cold Sore



# STDs

# Chicken Pox



# Allergies