



**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 by sharing injection equipment. Early HIV is sometimes called acute HIV.

Signs and Symptoms of Early/Acute HIV

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

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

COULD IT BE EARLY HIV?

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

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

Flu and Early/Acute 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/Acute HIV Symptoms

Rash • Mouth Sores

If you are not sure if you have COVID-19, the flu, or early/acute HIV, ask yourself the questions below. If you answer "Yes" to two or more questions, 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?

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Testing for Early/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/acute HIV, talk to your health care provider. Certain HIV tests can detect HIV as early as 7-10 days after an exposure took place. By talking with your health care provider about your symptoms, and your recent risk for HIV, they can make sure you get the proper tests to detect early/acute HIV.

Waiting for Test Results

While waiting for your test results, it is very important for you to know that if you have early/acute 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
- using a condom every time, if you have sex
- not sharing needles or other drug paraphernalia, if you use drugs.

Treatment of Early/Acute HIV infection

- If you find out you have early/acute 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 it 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 it has few or no side effects.

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For More Information on Early/Acute HIV, HIV, and/or 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/

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

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

Or visit www.cdc.gov/hiv

Healthline

- www.healthline.com/health/acute-hiv-infection



