

# American Indian and Alaska Natives

## HIV/AIDS Facts

**What is HIV/AIDS?** HIV stands for human immunodeficiency virus. It is the virus that can lead to acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, or AIDS. Unlike some other viruses, the human body cannot get rid of HIV. That means that once you have HIV, you have it for life.

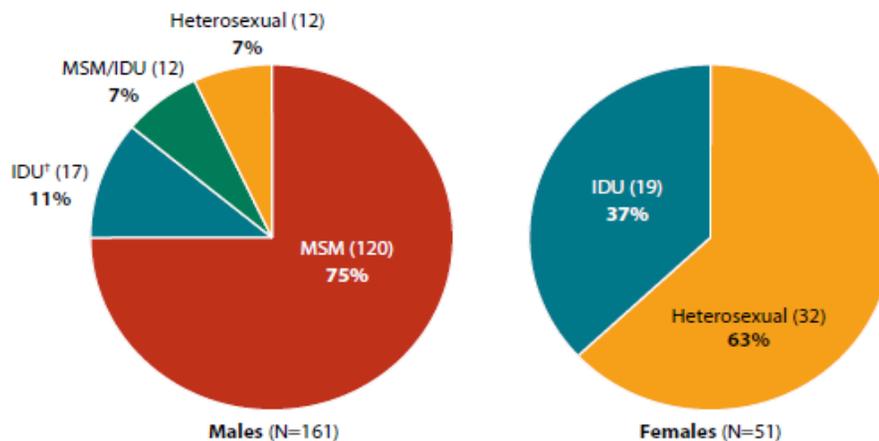
**How is HIV transmitted?** HIV is transmitted (spread) through the blood, semen, genital fluids, or breast milk of a person infected with HIV. Having unprotected sex or sharing drug injection equipment (such as needles and syringes) with a person infected with HIV are the most common ways HIV is transmitted.

**How can you prevent HIV?** Know your HIV status. Abstain from sexual activity or be in a long-term mutually monogamous relationship with an uninfected partner. If sexually active, use condoms correctly and consistently. Do not inject drugs. If you inject drugs, you should use clean needles and works when injecting. Never share your needles/works.

**How prevalent is it in the AI/AN population?** HIV/AIDS has had an overwhelming effect on minorities and is a devastating public health issue among approximately 5.2 million American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) living in the United States.

- ◆ In 2011, AI/AN women were almost three times more likely to be diagnosed with HIV infection, as compared to the White female population.
- ◆ AI/AN have a 50% higher AIDS rate as compared to the white population.
- ◆ AI/AN ranked fifth in estimated rates of HIV infection diagnoses in 2011.

### Estimated Diagnoses of HIV Infection among Adult and Adolescent American Indians/Alaska Natives by Transmission Category and Gender, United States, 2011\*



\*Because of rounding, the percentages do not equal 100%. Because the estimated total (N) was calculated independently of the values of the subpopulation, the subpopulation values do not sum to the total. <sup>†</sup>Injection drug use.

**Screening for HIV/AIDS** The only way to determine whether you are infected is to be tested for HIV infection. For information on where to find an HIV testing site, visit the National HIV Testing Resources Web site at [www.hivtest.org](http://www.hivtest.org) or call CDC-INFO 24 Hours/Day at 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636).

### National Indian Women's Health Resource Center

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**Vision:** American Indian and Alaska Native women and families living a healthy, balanced life.



**Mission:** To empower American Indian and Alaska Native women and families to build happy, healthy communities.