HIV transmission through urine? [1]

Alice,

Can the HIV be passed through urine?

Thanks,

Curious

Answer

Dear Curious,

Since the onset of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) epidemic, there?s been much confusion surrounding HIV transmission routes. However, in the years since, there?s been more and more information available about how the virus is passed from one person to another. To answer your question, Curious, HIV cannot be transmitted through urine. In fact, only antibodies (produced by the immune system to combat infection, but aren?t infectious themselves) are present in urine. HIV also cannot be transmitted through tears, sweat, or feces, nor can it be spread via toilet seats, air, water, insects, casual contact, or drinking fountains. The virus can only be transmitted through blood, semen and pre-seminal fluid, vaginal and cervical secretions, and breast milk. For more information, check out Routes of HIV Transmission? [2].

Although HIV cannot be transmitted through urine, a pee sample can be used to test for the presence of HIV in the body. An enzyme immunoassay detects antibodies using urine, oral fluid, or blood as samples. A positive enzyme immunoassay test is then followed up by a confirmatory follow-up test, such as the Western blot test [3]. Other types of HIV tests detect antigens (proteins produced by the virus) or the viral genetic material, but these tests only use blood samples.

In any case, it can take two to three months after infection for the immune system to produce enough antibodies to show up on a test, so during this ?window period?, a person may not test positive for HIV even if they?re infected (they can, however, still infect others). If you?re concerned you?ve been exposed to the virus, getting tested for HIV is recommended. To find a clinic in your area that provides testing, check out the National HIV and STD Testing Resources [4].
Category: HIV/AIDS

Related questions

- Risk of HIV from using the bathroom? [8]
- How effective is at-home HIV testing kit? [7]
- HIV antibodies at 3 or 6 months [8]

Resources

- HIV Testing and Treatment (Morningside) [9]
- Medical Services (Morningside) [10]
- Medical Services (CUMC) [11]

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