



CURRENT HIV PREFERRED LANGUAGE*

| Preferred | Stigmatizing |
|---|---|
| Person/People Living with HIV PLWHA Focus is on the person not the illness | HIV Infected HIV/AIDS Patient HIV Positive |
| Died of AIDS-related complications, died of AIDS-related illness, end stage HIV | Died of AIDS |
| HIV (AIDS is a diagnosis and cannot be transmitted) | AIDS Virus |
| Not medically accurate, use AIDS or Stage 3 HIV | Full-blown AIDS |
| Redundant since the V stands for virus. Use HIV | HIV Virus |
| Zero new acquisitions, transmissions | Zero new infections |
| HIV transmission, diagnosed with HIV, PLWH | HIV infections |
| Living with/diagnosed with or contracted/acquired | HIV infected |
| Number of diagnosed | Number of infections |
| Contracted, acquired, diagnosed with | Became infected |
| Infant exposed to HIV | HIV-exposed infant |
| Serodifferent, mixed-status couple | Serodiscordant Couple |
| Vertical transmission/perinatal transmission | Mother to child transmission |
| Person living with HIV, survivor, warrior | Victim, innocent victim, sufferer, infected |
| Children orphaned by loss of parents who died of AIDS-related complications | AIDS orphans |
| HIV test (AIDS is a diagnosis not tested) | AIDS test |
| Contract HIV, AIDS diagnosis, developed AIDS | To catch, contract, transmit AIDS, or catch HIV |
| Adherent | Compliant |
| Sex worker, sale of sexual services, transactional sex | Prostitute or prostitution |
| Based on values, use "having multiple sex partners" | Promiscuous |
| Condomless sex, using biomedical approaches to prevention like PrEP or TasP | Unprotected Sex |
| Chronic or manageable health condition with access to appropriate treatment | Death Sentence, Fatal Condition, life-threatening condition |
| Blood containing HIV, shared needles | Tainted blood, dirty needles |
| Clean implies people living with HIV are dirty | Clean |
| Drug that prevents transmission | Drug that prevents HIV infection |
| End transmission | End HIV, End AIDS |
| Undetectable, virally suppressed, effective treatment. U=U (undetectable=untransmittable) | On pills |

*This language has been adapted from the SERO Project created by people living with HIV

Words matter. Try incorporating these terms while speaking about HIV. We continue to educate in order to reduce stigma and improve the lives of those living with HIV.