



AIDS

men make a difference

World Aids Day, 1 December 2000



Message from Dr Shigeru Omi

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1 December is a special day every year when we observe World AIDS Day. On this day we recommit ourselves to work in partnership with others to stop further spread of HIV.

The theme for this year's World AIDS Campaign is **AIDS: Men Make a Difference**. 1 December 2000 also initiates a two-year campaign focusing on the role of men in the AIDS epidemic.

The campaign aims at increasing the role that men play in prevention of HIV and AIDS care.

There are good reasons why we need to focus on men. Over 80% of HIV infections worldwide occur through sexual relationships. Another 5% or so take place among people who inject drugs, four-fifths of whom are men.

When men are engaged in fighting AIDS, they are able to change the course of the epidemic. Experiences around the world and in our Region have demonstrated that men's behaviour can change, and changes in behaviour can contain the epidemic. The changes include delaying the onset of sexual intercourse and using condoms more consistently. Examples of intervention in the region include involvement of men in the implementation of 100% condom use programme in Cambodia, education of children and supporting families and individuals affected by AIDS.

The WHO Western Pacific Regional Office will continue to support Member States in promoting interventions and services for both women and men. We will also enhance partnerships and work with governments, NGOs, the United Nations system and the media to bring about a change in the course of the epidemic and to improve the lives of families.



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Facts about HIV/AIDS/STI

Worldwide

- At the end of 1999, 34.3 million men, women and children were living with HIV or AIDS. Of them, 17.3 million were men, 15.7 million women and 1.3 million children less than 15 years old.
- 18.8 million had already died from the disease: 7.3 million men, 7.7 million women and 3.8 million children less than 15 years old.
- In 1999, there were 5.4 million people newly infected with HIV. 2.4 million were men, 2.3 million women and 620,000 children less than 15 years old.
- A total of 2.8 million AIDS deaths occurred in 1999, among the dead were 1.1 million men, 1.2 million women and 500,000 children less than 15 years old.
- Total number of AIDS orphans (children who lost their mother or both parents to AIDS when they were under the age of 15) since the beginning of the epidemic: 13.2 million.
- In 1999, there were 5.4 million new infections worldwide, of which 4 million were in sub-Saharan Africa, and 800,000 in South and South-East Asia.

Western Pacific Region

- There are four patterns of HIV incidence in the Region:
 - Countries with declining HIV incidence (Australia and New Zealand),
 - Countries with high HIV incidence among injecting drug users and increasing heterosexual transmission (China and Viet Nam),
 - Countries with increasing HIV incidence due to heterosexual transmission (Cambodia and certain areas of Papua New Guinea) and
 - Countries with low HIV incidence (all other countries).



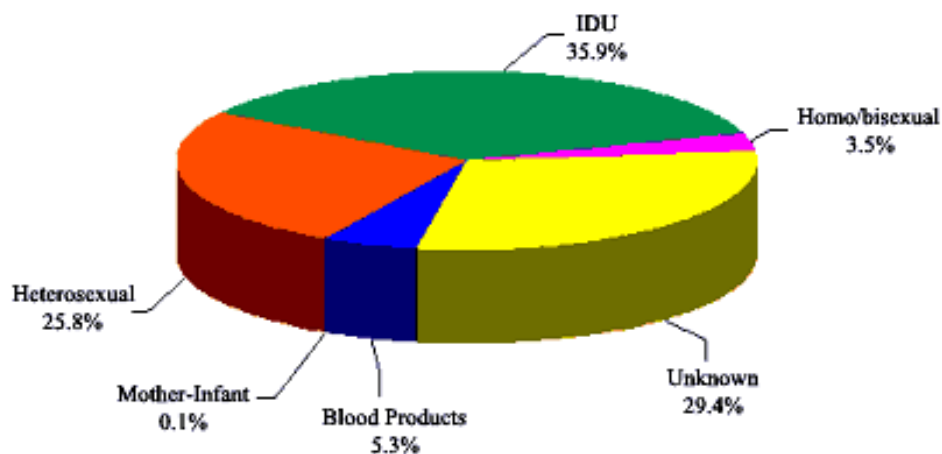
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- WHO estimates that each year there are more than 35 million new cases of curable sexually transmitted infections (STI), the majority of which are among 15-30 year olds.
- In the Region, cumulative totals of 120,039 cases of HIV infection and 24,483 cases of AIDS were reported by mid-1999.
- By the end of 2000, the total number of HIV-infected individuals is expected to exceed 1 million. Eighty percent of these will be men.

Reported HIV/AIDS by Risk Exposure Category Western Pacific Region 1999





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Estimated HIV prevalence and prevalence rates in Asia, 1999		
Country/Area	HIV prevalence adults (15-49)	HIV prevalence rate adults (15-49)
Cambodia *	170 000	3.3%
<u>Thailand</u>	740 000	2.2%
Myanmar	510 000	2.0%
India	3 500 000	0.7%
Papua New Guinea *	14 000	0.6%
Malaysia *	50 000	0.4%
Nepal	33 000	0.3%
Viet Nam *	100 000	0.2%
Singapore *	3 000	0.1%
Australia *	14 000	0.1%
Hong Kong,China *	3 700	<0.1%
China *	500 000	<0.1%
Philippines *	10 000	<0.1%
Sri Lanka	7 300	<0.1%
New Zealand *	1 200	<0.1%
Indonesia	52 000	<0.1%
Lao PDR *	1 400	<0.1%
Bangladesh	13 000	<0.1%
Republic of Korea *	3 800	<0.1%
Japan *	8 100	<0.1%
Total	>5 700 000	

* Western Pacific Region



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HIV Estimates for Men and Women in the Western Pacific Region, 1999				
Country/Area	Estimated HIV Prevalence in Men	% of Men HIV+ among Adults	Estimated HIV Prevalence in Women	% of Women HIV+ among Adults
Cambodia	112 500	66%	57 500	34%
Papua New Guinea	7 000	50%	7 000	50%
Malaysia	45 000	90%	5 000	10%
Viet Nam	80 000	80%	20 000	20%
Singapore	2 400	80%	600	20%
Australia	13 000	93%	1 000	7%
China	440 000	88%	60 000	12%
Hong Kong, China	2 800	76%	900	24%
Japan	7 000	86%	1 100	14%
Lao PDR	700	50%	700	50%
New Zealand	1 000	83%	200	17%
Philippine	6 000	60%	4 000	40%
Republic of Korea	3 300	87%	500	13%
Total	720 000	80%	180 000	20%



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Why focus on men?

The theme for the 2000 World AIDS Campaign is 'AIDS: Men Make a Difference'. The new Campaign aims to involve men more fully in the effort against AIDS. It is crucial not to isolate men as the origin of the problem but to involve them in search for a solution. We should aim to build upon successful work and include as many men as possible in prevention and care.

There are good reasons for focusing the World AIDS Campaign on men

1. Men's health is important but receives inadequate attention

Men are less likely to seek needed health care than women. In stressful situations, such as living with AIDS, men often cope less effectively than women. Young men are more at risk than older ones: about one in four people with HIV is a young man under the age of 25.

2. Some men's behaviour puts them at risk of HIV

While HIV transmission among women is growing, men continue to represent the majority of people living worldwide with HIV or AIDS. In some settings, men are less likely to pay attention to their sexual health and safety than are women. Men are more likely than women to use alcohol and other substances that lead to unsafe sex and increase the risk of HIV transmission, and men are more likely to inject drugs, risking infection from needles and syringes contaminated with HIV. A number of special circumstances such as men, who migrate for work and live away from their families, men in all-male environments such as the military and men in some all-male institutions such as prisons may place men at particularly high risk of contracting HIV.



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3. Men's influence and women's vulnerability

Some women are particularly vulnerable because they have less say in determining if, where and when sex should take place. Men may therefore be better targets for HIV prevention, and promotion of responsible and safer sexual practice.

4. Unprotected sex between men endangers both men and women

Most sex between men is hidden. According to surveys from across the world up to a sixth of all men report having had sex with another man. Many men who have sex with men also have sex with women – their wives or regular or occasional girlfriends. Hostility and misconceptions about sex between men have resulted in inadequate HIV prevalence measures in many countries.



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What can YOU do on World AIDS Day?

On World AIDS Day, the world unites in action to prevent HIV infection and to support those living with HIV and AIDS. We also take time to remember those who have died from AIDS.

The theme of this year's World AIDS Day is 'AIDS: Men Make a Difference'. This theme reminds us that men can be involved in AIDS prevention and care and can make a difference.

So, what can **YOU** do on World AIDS Day?

YOU could:

- ✓ Wear the red ribbon – the symbol of solidarity with people with AIDS.
- ✓ Find out more about HIV and AIDS. Do you have the information you need to help men and women you know to protect themselves from HIV?
- ✓ Talk about the important role that HIV and AIDS education can play in preventing the spread of the epidemic. You could organize debates, forums and group discussions.
- ✓ Ask people around in your community, your place of work, your place of recreation/sport what they know about HIV and AIDS. You could tell them of men's vulnerability to the HIV virus.
- ✓ Plan activities for your community or place of work to observe World AIDS Day. Such activities could include red ribbons for everyone or organizing activities such as a running marathon, a walk, a candlelight night, or a bicycle rally to observe World AIDS Day.
- ✓ Assist the families or friends of person living with the HIV virus. Find out what their needs are. Provide emotional support to them on this special day and always.
- ✓ Provide leadership by doing any of the above in your family, work place, university, network of friends or community.

AIDS is everyone's problem. As communities, we need to do all we can to prevent HIV infection, and intervention with men can and will make a difference.