

## **Mayo Clinic - Definition of HIV/AIDS**

*Information from Mayo Clinic on HIV/AIDS.*

AIDS is a chronic, potentially life-threatening condition caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). By damaging your immune system, HIV interferes with your body's ability to fight the organisms that cause disease.

HIV is a sexually transmitted disease. It can also be spread by contact with infected blood, or from mother to child during pregnancy, childbirth or breast-feeding. It can take years before HIV weakens your immune system to the point that you have AIDS.

There's no cure for HIV/AIDS, but there are medications that can dramatically slow the progression of the disease. These drugs have reduced AIDS deaths in many developed nations. But HIV continues to decimate populations in Africa, Haiti and parts of Asia.