

## WORDS

- **acquire** = to get
- **although** = while
- **attack** = hit
- **blood transfusion** = to put new blood into another animal or person
- **brain** = the organ inside your head that controls how you move, feel and think
- **cause** = lead to
- **chimpanzee** = a small intelligent ape
- **cure** = a medicine that makes a person healthy again
- **deficiency** = if you do not have enough of something
- **disease** = illness
- **fluid** = liquid, something that is watery
- **get in touch** = get in contact with
- **homosexual men** = men who have sex with other men
- **however** = but
- **identify** = here: to observe something for the first time
- **immune system** = the system by which the body protects itself from diseases
- **infect** = to make a disease or illness go from one person to another
- **infected blood** = blood that carries HIV in it
- **nervous system** = all the nerves in your body
- **occur** = happen
- **pneumonia** = a very serious illness of the lungs in which it is very difficult to breathe
- **sneeze** = air suddenly comes out of your nose and you make a noise; it happens when you have a cold
- **spread** = to go from one place to another
- **syndrome** = disease
- **treatment** = something that doctors do to cure someone
- **vaccine** = something that is injected into your body or blood and protects you from a disease
- **victim** = a person who has AIDS

In the middle of the 1970s a new **disease** emerged. It was called AIDS, or **acquired immune deficiency syndrome**. Scientists and doctors didn't know anything about it at first but until today AIDS has killed 25 million people and about 50 million may be **infected**. AIDS **occurs** all over the world, but southern Africa, Asia and the United States have had more AIDS **victims** than other countries.

### *Causes of AIDS*

AIDS is caused by a virus called HIV (human immunodeficiency virus). It enters the body when you get into contact with **infected** blood or other body **fluids**. Coughing, **sneezing** or handshaking do not **spread** AIDS. And you don't have to be afraid of being in the same room with an **infected** person either.

HIV kills white blood cells, part of the body's **immune system**, which fight off **diseases**. Over many years the body gets weaker and weaker. **Diseases** that normally do not hurt you may kill you. The AIDS virus **attacks** the **nervous system** and can **cause** eye or **brain** damage. People with AIDS often get **pneumonia** and die. At first you may not know that you are **infected** because you don't feel anything. But even then you may pass on AIDS to other people.

**Although** doctors and scientists have been working on a **cure** for a long time, no **vaccine** has been found yet. With the right **treatment** you can live with HIV for many years. **However** people can prevent **HIV infection** by keeping out of contact with bodies that may be infected.

In the 1980s AIDS also **spread** through **blood transfusions**. Today, doctors make blood tests before giving it to those who need it.

### *History of AIDS*

AIDS probably started in Africa, where people didn't know that it existed. American doctors first **identified** the virus in 1981. It came from a **chimpanzee** in western Africa. The virus entered humans when people who hunted animals **got in touch** with **infected blood**. In the early 1980s **homosexual** men, mostly in the United States were infected. Other early AIDS patients were drug users who got the **disease** from dirty needles.

### *Freddy Mercury*

Within ten years after the first case, the disease **spread** all over the world. It was clear that all kinds of people could get the disease. Patients were **infected** by **blood transfusions**; women by their male sexual partners, children by their mothers before they were born. The public was alarmed when famous people, like tennis star Arthur Ashe or Queen lead singer Freddy Mercury became AIDS **victims**.

Today two thirds of all HIV **infected** are in central and southern Africa. Another 20% are in Asia and the Pacific. Experts say about 14,000 people are **infected** every day.

