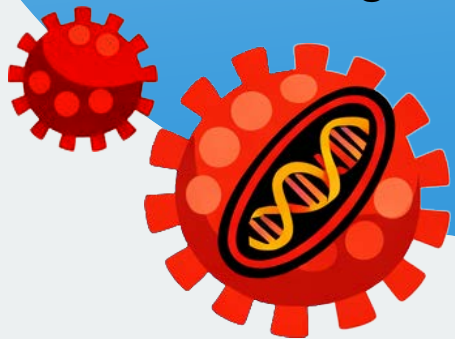


# HIV and AIDS: What's the Difference?

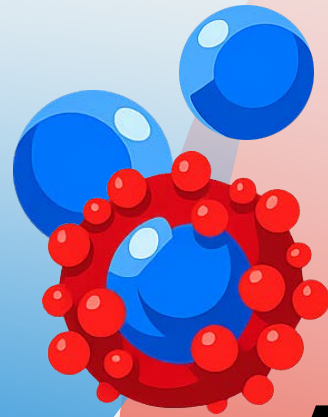
## HIV

- HIV is the virus that causes HIV infection.
- HIV damages the immune system by attacking and destroying the infection-fighting CD4 cells.



## CD4 Cells (CD4 T lymphocytes)

- CD4 cells help coordinate the immune response.
- HIV can recognize and infect CD4 cells.
- CD4 cells are a type of white blood cell that help protect the body from infection with viruses, bacteria, and fungi.

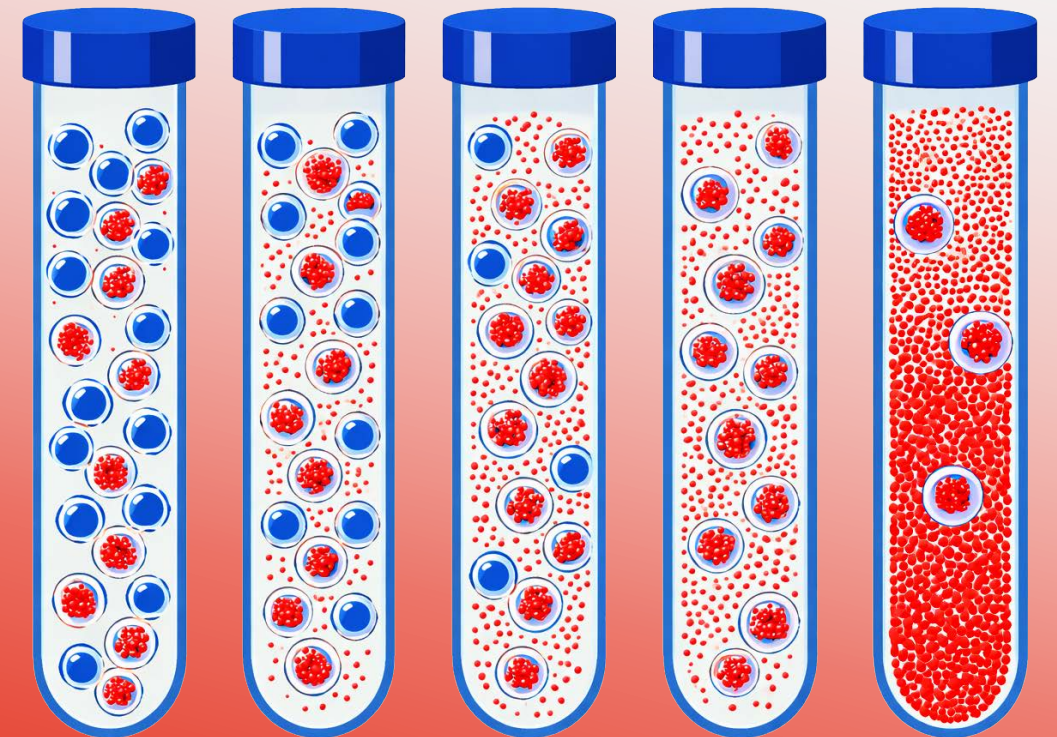


## AIDS

- AIDS is the most severe stage of HIV infection.
- During this stage, the level of HIV in the blood is very high and the number of CD4 cells is limited.
- Antiretroviral therapy (ART) can prevent HIV from multiplying and progressing to AIDS.
- Without ART, chronic HIV infection usually advances to AIDS in 10 years or longer.

## Years without HIV medicines

2 4 6 8 10



For more information, visit [HIVinfo.NIH.gov](https://www.hivinfo.nih.gov).