

## AIDS IN SOUTH AFRICA:

# FACTS AND FIGURES

AIDS was first diagnosed in South Africa in 1982. From 1982 to March 1988 there have been 118 known cases of AIDS in South Africa.

Of these 118 people 96 are South African.

Of the South Africans:

77 are homosexual/bisexual

10 are heterosexual

4 are the result of blood transfusions

5 are haemophiliacs

88 are white

6 are black

1 is asian

1 is coloured

Of the 118 cases, 22 are not South African and of this group:

21 (95%) are heterosexual

17 (77%) are males

16 (73%) are "african"

5 (23%) are "white"

1 (5%) is "asian"

## Incidence figures of AIDS in South Africa

For South Africa as a whole the incidence is 1,8 cases per million people per year.

## South African mean doubling time

This has been calculated to be 11,4 months. In other words, in approximately one year from March 1988 (118 cases diagnosed) there will be 236 cases of Aids and by

March 1990 there will be 472 cases. (These predictions have been based on 5 years of observations and may change considerably.)

## **Facts about HIV infection**

Based on the above figures, AIDS clearly is affecting ALL South Africans regardless of their sexual preference or racial classification. Although "white" male homosexuals at present form the main group in which AIDS has been diagnosed, it is by no means confined to this group of people and the figures of HIV infection that follow seem to indicate that many more black people are carrying the virus and may later develop AIDS itself.

Over 9 months the South African Blood Transfusion Service tested blood taken, probably for other purposes, from 50 000 pregnant women. Of these, 26 black mothers were found to be carrying the virus. The service also tested 800 000 blood samples of donors from November 1985 to December 1987. Of these samples, 37 individuals were found to be carrying the virus.

## **Conclusions**

AIDS and HIV infection ARE problems amongst all people of South Africa. It is not confined to "white" male homosexuals. Transmission amongst heterosexual South Africans has occurred and further transmission in this way can be expected.

Because AIDS is a disease that was discovered only recently, and national data have not yet become available, definite predictions about the spread of an HIV/AIDS epidemic cannot be made at this stage. Only a small percentage of the population has been tested and therefore the figures quoted in this article probably represent only a "tip of the iceberg" of the disease in South Africa.