

Blood-borne HIV: Risks and Prevention

By Mariette Correa, David Gisselquist and Deodatta Hari Gore. Hyderabad: Orient Longman Private Ltd. ISBN 13: 978-81-250-3462-9 and ISBN 10: 81-250-3462-5

This is a 91-page book written to fill the gap that exists in public education about HIV prevention. The book focuses on the country of India, where public discussion of HIV risk concentrates on sexual transmission and overlooks blood exposures.

The book is made up of a two-page introduction, giving an overview of the book, followed by four chapters. Chapter 1 introduces HIV, then concentrates on the HIV epidemic in India. India's National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) estimates that 86% of the country's estimated 2.47 million individuals with HIV contracted the virus through sexual activity, yet the authors argue that this statistic is not verifiable. The authors argue with evidence that more AIDS patients in India have had possible exposures to HIV through injections, tattooing, piercing, dentistry and other health care.

In Chapter 2 the authors discuss HIV risk and HIV prevention through both heterosexual and homosexual sexual exposures, mother-to-child transmission and medical blood exposure. In Chapter 3, which the authors call the 'core' of the book, 15

common skin-piercing procedures in health care (injections, infusions, blood tests, dental care, transfusions, obstetrics and gynaecology care, operations, blood donations and home-based care), and in cosmetic services (shaving, tattooing, piercing, beauty parlours, home, and drug use), are discussed and some pictures of instruments are provided. For each of these procedures, the book discusses the risks, and advises how to ensure that the patient or client is safe. The final chapter of this book looks at community responses to reduce blood exposures.

This book is aimed at NGOs, communities, programme designers, and the public in general. It is written in a simple to understand manner and is written to empower the everyday, ordinary person to demand a better quality of service and therefore protect themselves.

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