

Increased incidence of enacted stigma or acts of discrimination

Reduced support for HIV/AIDS patients from friends, family, and other social support networks, as well as from meaningful influences

Lack of knowledge of one's own HIV status

Reduced use of HIV-testing and free clinics

Unprotected sex with other HIV-positive partners and other high-risk sexual behaviors, leading to complicated infection

Reduced use of infection-prevention, such as condoms

What is the impact of HIV/AIDS-related stigma?

Nondisclosure of HIV-positive status to sexual partners

Reduced or limited use of long-term HIV health and support services

Reduced pursuit of early care after diagnosis

Lack of adherence to treatment leading to health complications and the leading cause of HIV-related death

Increased incidence of HIV infection among adolescents and young persons, especially between the ages of 13 and 25

"Stigma remains the single most important barrier to public action. It is a main reason why too many people are afraid to see a doctor to determine whether they have the disease, or to seek treatment if so. It helps make AIDS the silent killer, because people fear the social disgrace of speaking about it, or taking easily available precautions. Stigma is a chief reason why the AIDS epidemic continues to devastate societies around the world."

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon