



# What we should know about the HIV virus and AIDS

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# The HIV virus

- It was discovered in France by the Luc Montagnier team in 1983.
- Considered as the causative agent of AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome)



- Scientists believe that HIV comes from a determined type of chimpanzee in West Africa.
- Human beings most likely came into contact with HIV when they hunted and ate the infected animals.
- Recent studies indicate that HIV may have been passed from monkeys to humans in the late 1800's.






# The HIV Virus

- HIV:
  - Is a virus
  - Attacks the immune system (that is why it makes it deficient).
  - This particular virus can only infect human beings.
  - “Human immune deficiency virus”



- Its main job is too attack the cells of the immune system, which is responsible for protecting us from disease.

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- There are two families of virus which cause human immunodeficiency:
    - Human immune deficiency virus (HIV1)\*\*
    - Human immune deficiency virus (HIV2).

*HIV 1 is the most prevalent and virulent form.*

*HIV2 occurs with more frequency in East Africa than in other parts of Africa.*

*\*\* Virus which we will discuss*



- Both viruses attack specific lymphocytes.
- One of them are the CD4 lymphocytes, ie T lymphocytes helpers.
- When the count of the CD4 lymphocytes decreases and is below 200 cells per cc of blood it is in the range where AIDS, or acquired immune deficiency syndrome is diagnosed.



## Human immune deficiency virus (HIV)

- It is very similar to other viruses, including those that cause the “flu” or the common cold. However, there is one important difference.
- The case with HIV – the human immune system cannot seem to get rid of it.
- Scientists are still trying to find out why.



- Not all persons who have this virus develop the AIDS disease.
- **Lifestyle**, plays an important role in not developing AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome).

# Difference between HIV and AIDS

- It is not the same to have HIV as having AIDS
- AIDS is the advanced stage of the infection caused by HIV.
- This occurs when the virus (HIV) weakens the body's defenses and the "opportunistic diseases" appear that take advantage of the weakened defenses.





# What are opportunistic diseases?

- **Opportunistic Infections** occur when the immune system of the patient is weakened and they attack it. That is why they are called opportunistic.
- They can cause devastating diseases.
- The main opportunistic infections associated to AIDS are grouped in parasites, bacterias, fungi, and viruses.





## Some of the main ones are:

- Candidiasis (yeast) of the bronchi, trachea, esophagus or lung
- Invasive cervical cancer
- Simple Herpes (virus)
- Chronic ulcers (more than 1 month duration) or bronchitis, pneumonitis or esophagitis.
- Lymphoma, in multiple forms
- Tuberculosis



# Where you find HIV

- Body fluids:
  - Blood
  - Semen
  - Pre-seminal Lubricant
  - Vaginal discharge
  - Breast milk

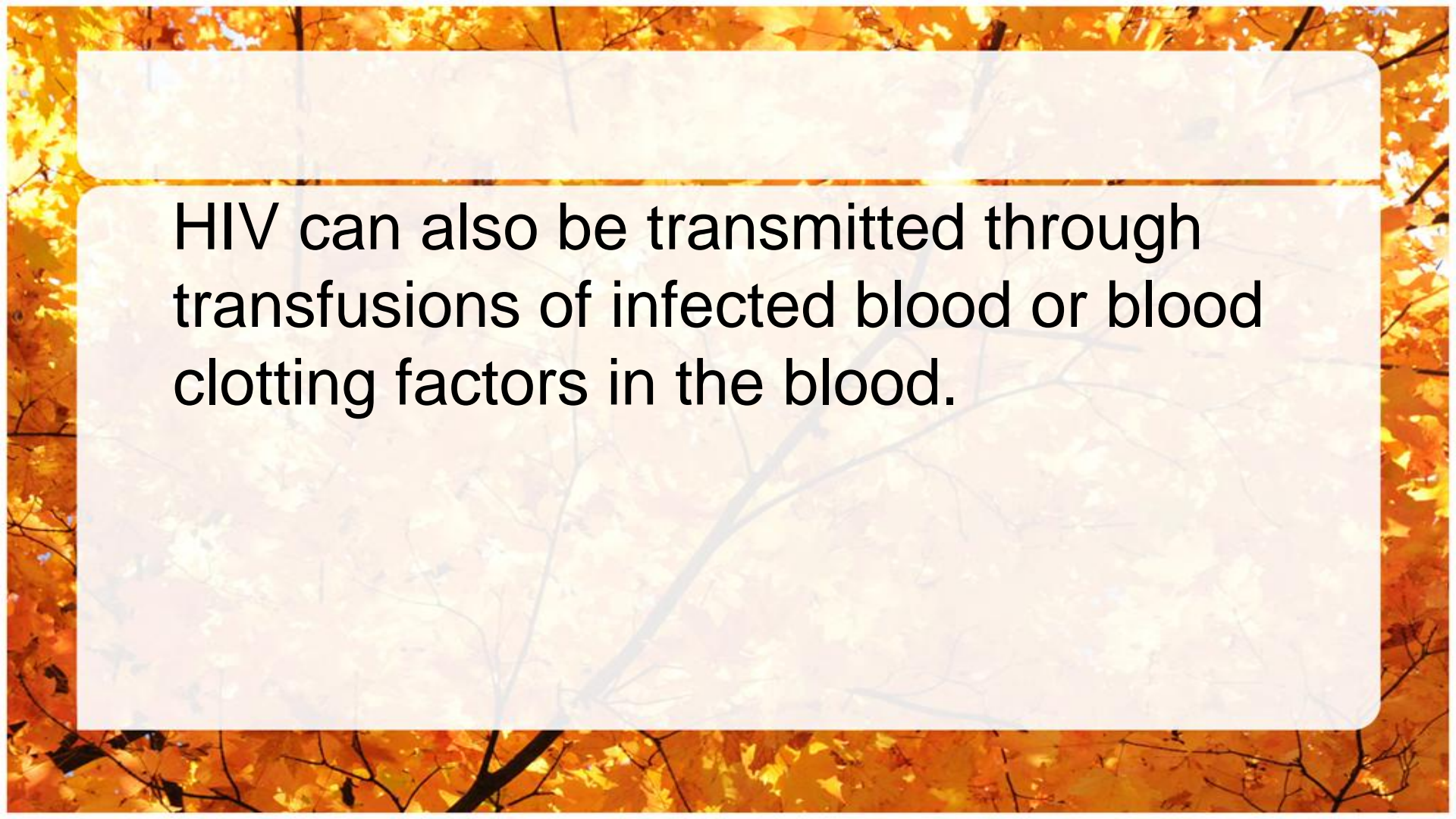
## How is it transmitted?

- By sharing needles, razors, tattoo needles, pliers (dental) or any other sharp object; also by sharing instruments that contain blood from an infected person.



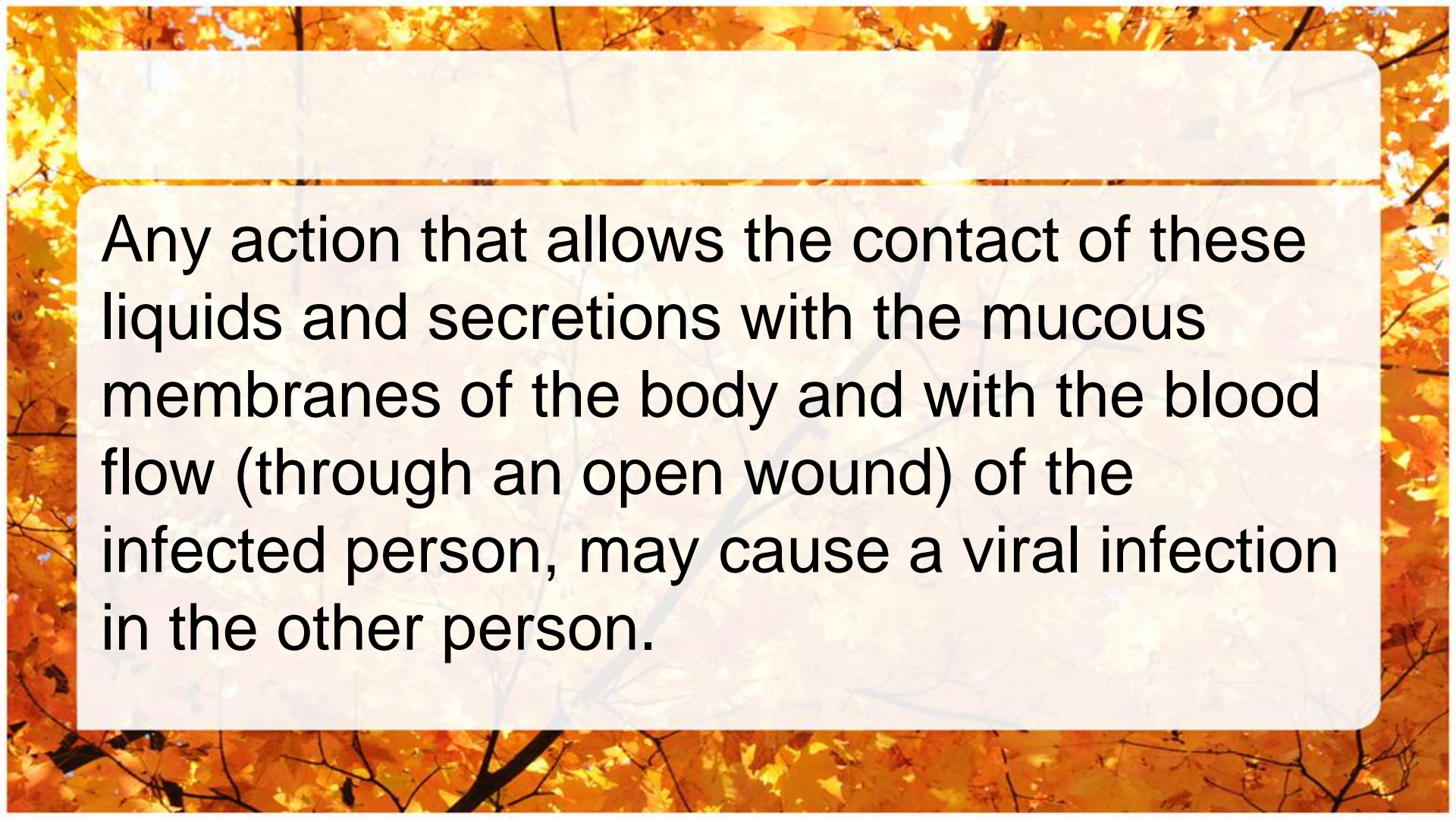
# How is it transmitted?

- By having sexual relations
  - Vaginal, anal or oral, Without Protection.
- Transmitted from mother to child.
  - When the mother who has HIV can pass it on to the baby during pregnancy, at the moment of delivery and during lactation.




HIV can also be transmitted through transfusions of infected blood or blood clotting factors in the blood.





Any action that allows the contact of these liquids and secretions with the mucous membranes of the body and with the blood flow (through an open wound) of the infected person, may cause a viral infection in the other person.



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- HIV is not transmitted through:
    - Kisses
    - Hugs
    - Sharing cups, utensils
    - Sharing clothes
    - Using the same bathroom
    - Through sweat
    - Tears

IS NOT TRANSMITTED BY MOSQUITOS



# However...

- Other bodily fluids and other waste products such as feces, nasal fluid, saliva, sweat, tears, urine or in vomit do not contain sufficient HIV to infect, unless they have blood mixed in with them and the person has significant and direct contact with them.



# Symptoms

- The symptoms of infection by HIV vary in function to the state in which it is found.
- In it's initial stage, many persons do not experience symptoms from the HIV infection.





- Even though in most cases the peak of infectivity is reached in the first months, many times the subject is unaware that he/she is a carrier until it reaches more advanced phases.



# Symptoms

- Some may have:
  - Fever
  - Skin rash
  - Sore throat and cough
  - Swollen lymph nodes
  - Weight loss
  - They experience weakness and lethargy
  - Diarrhea

# Symptoms

- HIV can infect the brain, causing memory loss
  - Difficulty to think and
  - dementia.
- A person can go for years before he/she develops AIDS.



# Prevention

The HIV Virus is 100% preventable, if the appropriate measures are taken:

- No drug use or sharing of needles.
- Sexual abstinence
- Use condom or prophylactic
- Careful use of contaminated utensils



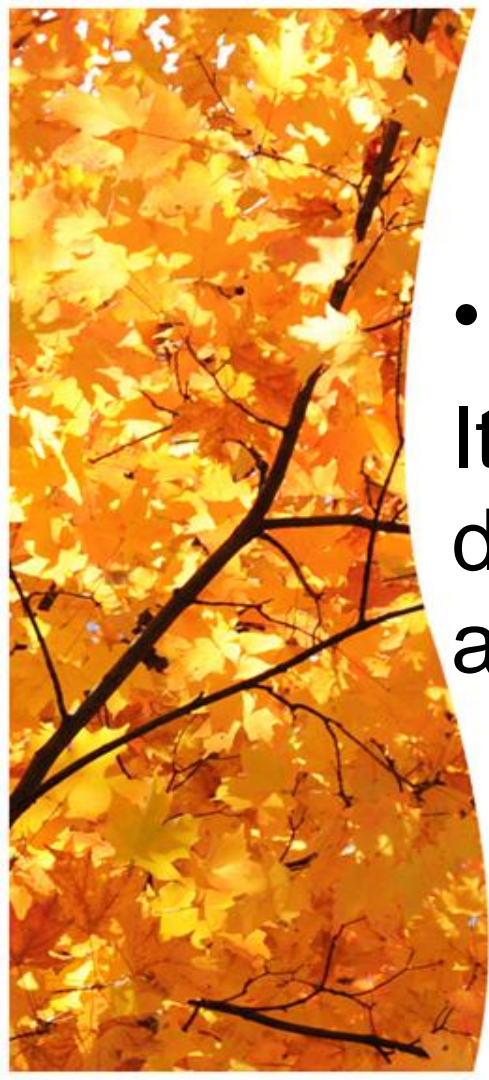
# Treatment

- Highly effective treatments exist today to control HIV
- Treatment usually does not begin until the patient shows symptoms and has a CD4 or T defenses count below 200 cells per milliliter of blood.



- One of the objectives of the HIV treatment is to reduce the risk of contracting opportunistic infections.
- Antiretroviral therapy may help by increasing the number of CD4 cells or T helper cells.
- The antiretroviral treatment allows a person infected with HIV to lead a healthy and productive life.





- Also by prophylaxis (preventive)  
It is a treatment done with some drugs that are used to prevent the attack of opportunistic infections.



# Prognosis

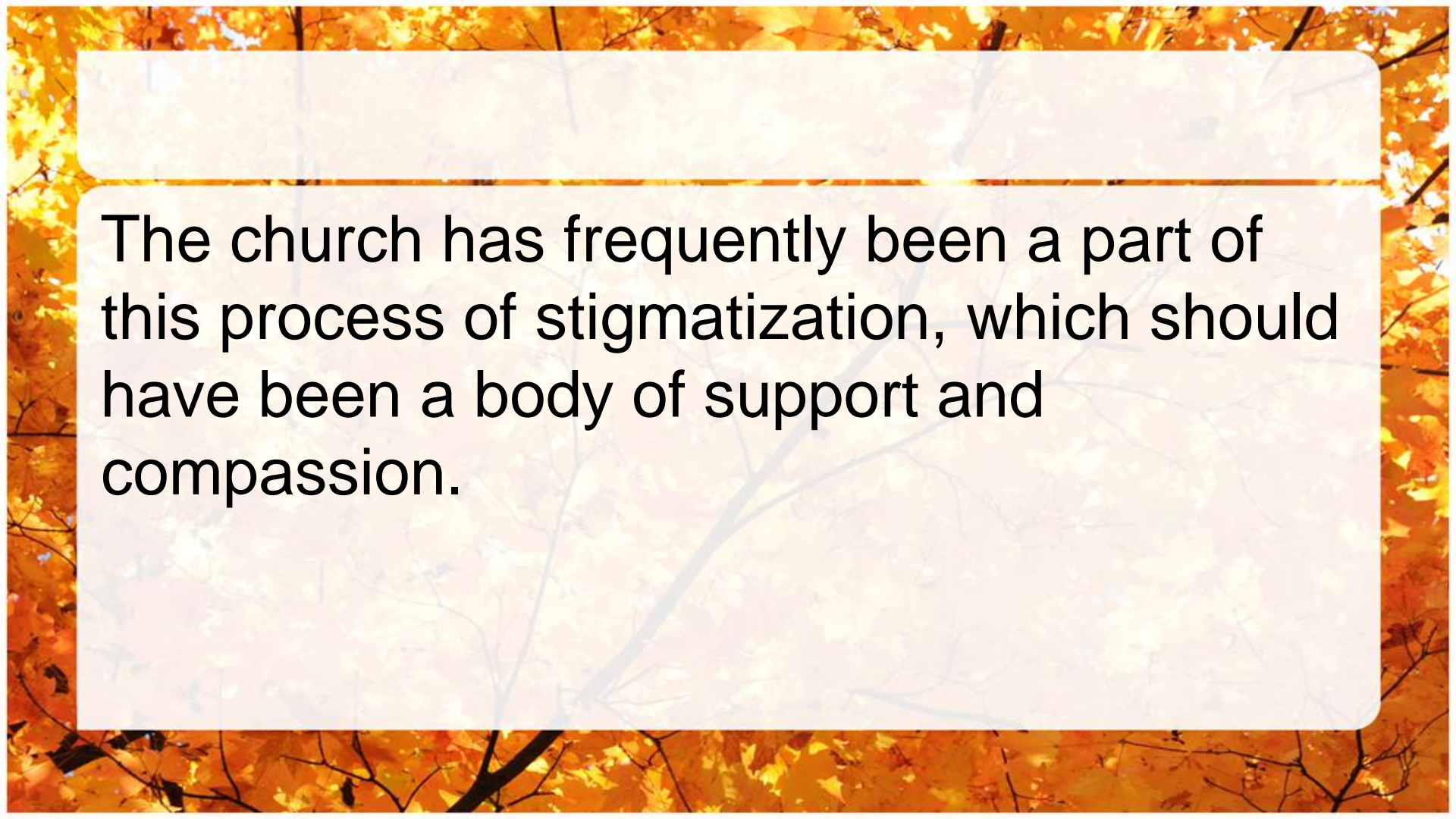
- Many people have lived for many years without any serious infections.
- Others have died after a few months.
- Drugs have helped many persons to live longer.
- Some have lived more than 20 years and are still doing well.
- Treatment is a life extender.



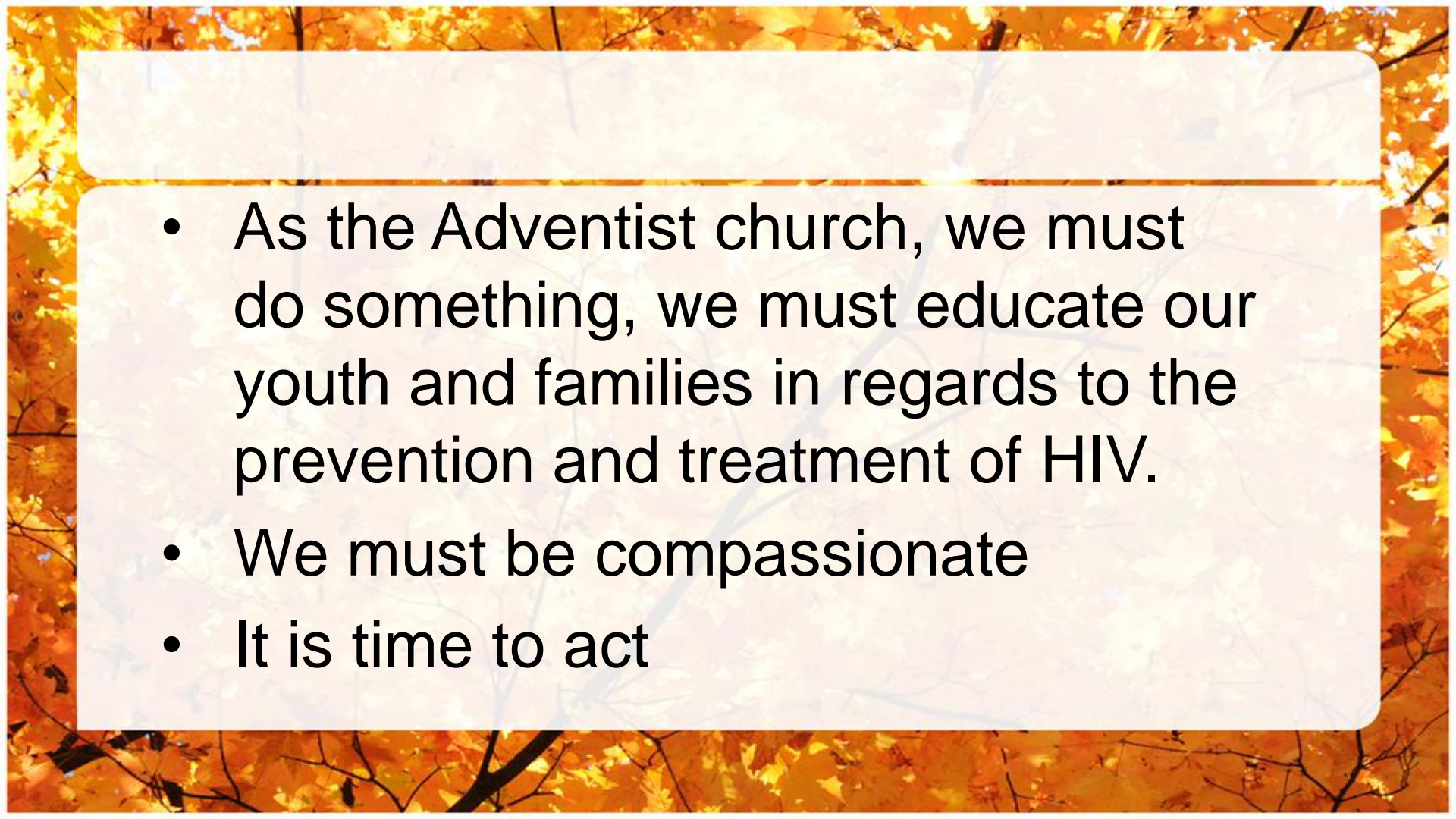
# Social Impacto

- Stigma is a heavy burden that is unnecessarily added.
- People feel marginated and rejected due to this disease.
- Many die alone, hungry, weak and rejected.





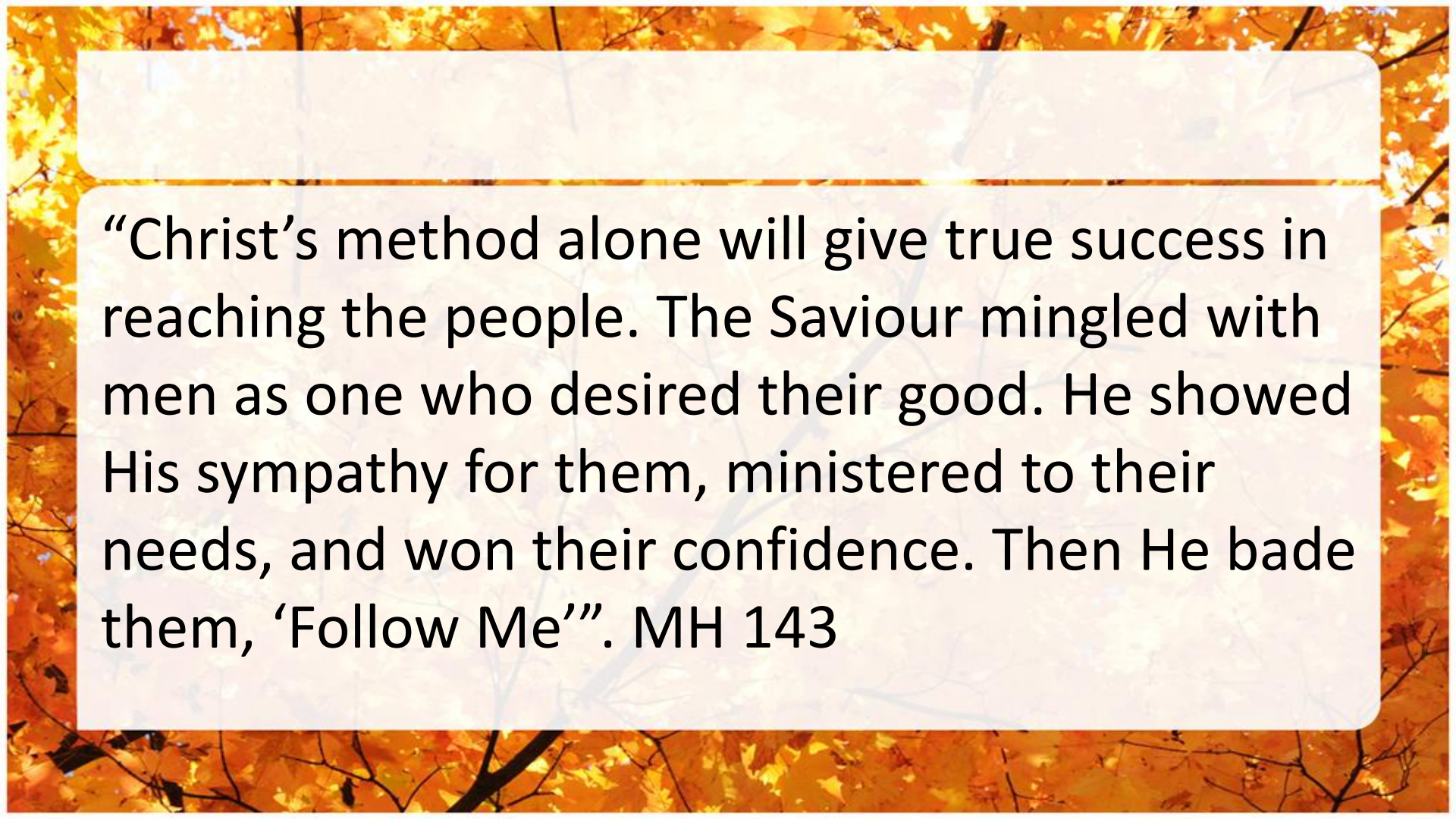
The church has frequently been a part of this process of stigmatization, which should have been a body of support and compassion.

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- As the Adventist church, we must do something, we must educate our youth and families in regards to the prevention and treatment of HIV.
  - We must be compassionate
  - It is time to act



When healing diseases, many times Christ would say to the sick: “Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.’ John 5:14. Thus He taught that they had brought disease upon themselves by transgressing the laws of God, and that health could be preserved only by obedience.” MH 113.





“Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me’”. MH 143