

## **HIV/AIDS Prayer Guide (Seven Days)**

*“Listen to my cry for help, for I am brought very low. Rescue me from my pursuers, for they are too strong for me.” Psalm 142:7*

Every day over 6800 people become infected with HIV and over 5700 people die from AIDS. These facts are true mostly because of inadequate access to HIV intervention and treatments. Over 33.2 million people live with HIV/AIDS around the world. These are poor, hungry people who have been oppressed and alienated with little or no access to basic health care. Over three quarters of these are in developing countries. Since HIV/AIDS aggravates the circumstances that nurture its spread, it is taking an overwhelming toll on families and communities. It is also affecting the political and economic growth and stability of nations. Fear, blame, and rejection of victims infected by HIV/AIDS tend to increase its transmission. (UNAIDS, 2007 Report on Global AIDS)

Because we are people of faith, we are called to create an environment of hope, concern, and care for people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. This prayer guide has been written to increase our understanding and compassion for people suffering with HIV/AIDS. It is written to remind us of our responsibility to keep them in our prayers.

This prayer guide can also be used in correlation with the packing of BGR In-Home Care Kits. As your church or group buys, gathers, and packs the buckets, it can be used to direct specific prayers concerning items in the buckets. Please feel free to copy any portion of this prayer guide as the need arises.

Will you pray for hope, for healing, and for a cure? Will you ask God to put an end to stigma and discrimination? Will you pray for justice to alleviate the conditions of hunger and poverty that promote the transmission this deadly disease?

*“Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities, the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.” Isaiah 53:4-5.*

### **DAY ONE:**

What is HIV? Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is the virus that can cause AIDS. It gradually destroys certain blood cells that are important to the immune system. People may have HIV for long periods of time before significant damage is done to their immune system and for AIDS to develop. What is AIDS? Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is that condition at the

ending phase of the HIV infection in which an individual's immune system is so deteriorated that various infections and cancers are easily allowed to enter the body.

BGR has chosen a 5 gallon plastic bucket to house the contents of the In-Home Care Kit. Why is the bucket so important? It is a uniform way for BGR to ship the items. All of the buckets being the same size and color (white) makes it easier to pass through customs.

Once the bucket is distributed it can be used:

- for storage of the contents or other personal items away from inclement weather
- to store food away from rodents and insects
- to carry and store clean water
- for washing clothes or for bathing
- as a place to sit

Ask God to bless not only the hands that receive the bucket, but also the hands that deliver it. Pray specifically that the one delivering the bucket will do so in an appropriate manner that will be pleasing to God. Ask for the healing of the sick person who is receiving the bucket you are packing. Pray that it will be used in ways that will best minister to the one that is hurting. Pray for those who are giving their time and energy to care for the one sick. Pray that they would not grow weary in doing good.

*"At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. So he replied to the messengers, 'Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard. The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.'" Luke 7:21-22.*

## **DAY TWO:**

HIV/AIDS is one of the world's most deadly contagious diseases. It has become the number one killer in Africa, overtaking malaria. Because of how it is transmitted, many patients have fallen victim to prejudice, but it has also led to innovative campaigns which have raised awareness about sexual health and gender relations.

Some people with HIV experience a flu-like illness lasting a few weeks at the time of initial infection. This illness goes away on its own. Next comes a period of time during which the individual is well and may not have any more symptoms for years. Eventually, HIV overcomes the body's immune defenses and symptoms begin to occur.

There are several items in the BGR In Home Care Kit that will provide comfort for those in the last stages of AIDS.

- Sores develop in the mouth that makes swallowing difficult. This causes the lips to dry out. There can also be sores on the lips. LIP BALM has been included to help bring some relief. Will you pray that the one using the lip balm will also discover the Balm of Gilead?

- Skin rashes or flaky skin appear. PETROLEUM JELLY acts as a barrier, keeping dirt and germs out of the affected area. It can also be used as a skin moisturizer. Will you pray for the caretaker who will use this item? Pray that as the petroleum jelly is applied, it will be a soothing solace to the sick one. Ask God to use this item as a barrier to keep out opportunistic infections.

*"Fear not, for I am with you." Isaiah 43:5*

### **DAY THREE:**

What are the long-term effects of HIV? When the body's immune system is no longer able to defend against HIV, the individual may contract any number of infections, such as tuberculosis, pneumonia, fungal and yeast infections and intestinal infections. Several types of cancer can also occur at this stage.

- Clipping the nails can be difficult. NAIL CLIPPERS can be used by the caretaker to clip the nails of the sick one. Will you pray for the caretaker's patience and compassion to be increased? Ask God to give the caretaker a large portion of kindness in this task.

*"At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd." Matthew 10:36*

### **DAY FOUR:**

There is no treatment that can eliminate HIV infection or cure AIDS. Antiretroviral medications have been introduced which can reduce the amount of HIV in a person's system and postpone the onset of AIDS. The antiretroviral medications used to treat HIV are very expensive, and some strains of HIV have become resistant to them.

- Cleanliness and sanitation are important in controlling conditions which increase symptoms of AIDS. WASH CLOTHS and a BATH TOWEL can make this job easier. Pray that as the patient is bathed, he/she will sense the cleansing in a deeper way.
- Diarrhea can be one of the most difficult symptoms to cope with. A VINYL MATTRESS PROTECTOR can shield the mattress from body fluids. Fresh BED LINENS can bring much comfort to irritated skin or feverish bodies. Pray for the protection of the patient – from infections and depression. Pray for the protection of the family during these difficult days. Pray for the protection of the caretaker as he/she gives care to the patient.

*"Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father." Matthew 5:16*

#### **DAY FIVE:**

AIDS is the biggest threat to Africa's development. The reason is the large numbers of people in key roles who are dying: teachers, farmers, health-workers, and young professionals. Sub-Saharan Africa is by far the region most affected by HIV/AIDS. Over a five-year period, 53% of staff illness in Ethiopian firms was AIDS-related. In Burkina Faso, 20% of rural families have cut back their farming activities because of AIDS. In Swaziland, the UN says that school enrollment has fallen 36% due to AIDS, largely because girls are frequently taken out of the classroom to care for sick relatives. In 2006 South Africa lost 21% of its teachers to AIDS.

- Sheets, towels, etc. must be scrubbed effectively to eliminate germs. A SCRUB BRUSH will help make this chore much simpler. Pray that as the linens are washed and scrubbed clean, that God will bring His cleansing to the patient and the whole household.
- LATEX GLOVES will not only protect the patient but will also protect the caretaker. As the caretaker puts on these gloves, ask God to allow him/her to be HIS HANDS. Pray that the patient will sense God's Hands of comfort and compassion on him/her in this time of need.

*"As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind? Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life. As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work." John 9:1-4*

#### **DAY SIX:**

As you finalize your buckets, pray that the one who is ill would be encouraged through your generous gift. Pray that their pain and suffering would be much less because of the items you have provided for them.

One 20 foot shipping container can hold approximately 720 In-Home Care Kits. As containers are filled they will be shipped to various countries in Africa to be distributed by local partners in appropriate ways. Pray that your kits will travel well from the USA to Africa and that there would be no problems or delays in customs in the respective countries. Pray that as each container is delivered, its contents will be delivered efficiently and that they will reach the most needed areas.

*“And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.” James 5:15*

**DAY SEVEN:**

The option of treatment for the majority of people living with HIV/AIDS in Africa seems impossible. High costs, demanding treatment schedules, and the lack of even basic health care are all barriers. There are also the challenges of the declining number of health professionals, poor patient follow up, and the availability of HIV/AIDS drugs. Pray that treatments will be made available to even the most destitute. Ask God to give those affected the patience to meet the trying schedules of treatment. Pray that God will give BGR wisdom as to what part we are to play in these challenges.

With so many people that have already died from HIV/AIDS, there is still a hope. Millions of dollars are put into this research and thousands of labs and scientists all over the world are researching and testing every day to find a cure. Pray that a cure for the HIV virus will be found soon and that the cure will be made available to the masses that need it.

BGR is about connecting people in need with people who care. You are the people who care! We pray that as your church or group packs these In-Home Care Kits you will sense the reality of God’s presence and that His Spirit will bring a unity among you that will be unsurpassed. We pray that this act of kindness will spur on other acts of kindness right in your own neighborhoods. We are the Body. Our hands should be reaching. Our feet should be going. Our words should be teaching. Our love should be showing that there is a WAY!