

Human T-Lymphotropic Virus Type-1

HTLV-1 is an organism that infects T-lymphocytes – a type of white blood cell in the body. It is an ancient virus common to Indigenous populations worldwide. HTLV-1 is transmitted through bodily fluids, and can occur during:

- Unprotected sexual intercourse
- Blood contact or transfusion
- Pregnancy
- Breastfeeding

HTLV-1 causes lifelong infection, and may result in leukaemia, lymphoma or myelopathy. It may also cause inflammation of the eyes, joints, muscles, skin, and lung tissue. There is evidence to suggest that HTLV-1 is strongly correlated with the development of chronic lung disease, including bronchiectasis.