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Shoba's story

Shoba is a fifteen-year-old student in Pakistan. She has just taken a biology class. She already knew that she could prevent illness by washing her hands after going to the bathroom and before she cooks or eats. But in class, she learned about how the body defends itself against sickness. She read about AIDS and the immune system, and she is interested in learning more about HIV and its effect on the body. Someday she wants to be a health worker. Shoba comes to you and asks, "What is HIV? How does HIV cause AIDS? Why can't the body overcome AIDS like it can the flu? Are there pills to cure AIDS?"

What is HIV?

HIV stands for "human immunodeficiency virus": "human" because the virus causes disease only in people; "immunodeficiency" because the immune system, which normally protects a person from disease, becomes weak; "virus" because like all viruses, HIV is a small organism that infects living things and