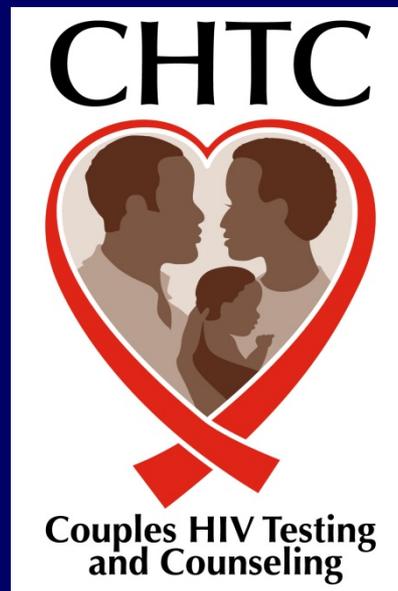


Couples HIV Testing and Counseling (CHTC) - *in Health Care Settings* -



Module Six: Delivering Results to HIV-Discordant Couples

Objectives of Module Six

By the end of this module, participants will be able to

- ❖ Deliver test results to HIV-discordant couples
- ❖ Provide key HIV prevention, care, and treatment recommendations to HIV-discordant couples
- ❖ Link HIV-discordant couples with appropriate follow-up prevention, care, and treatment services

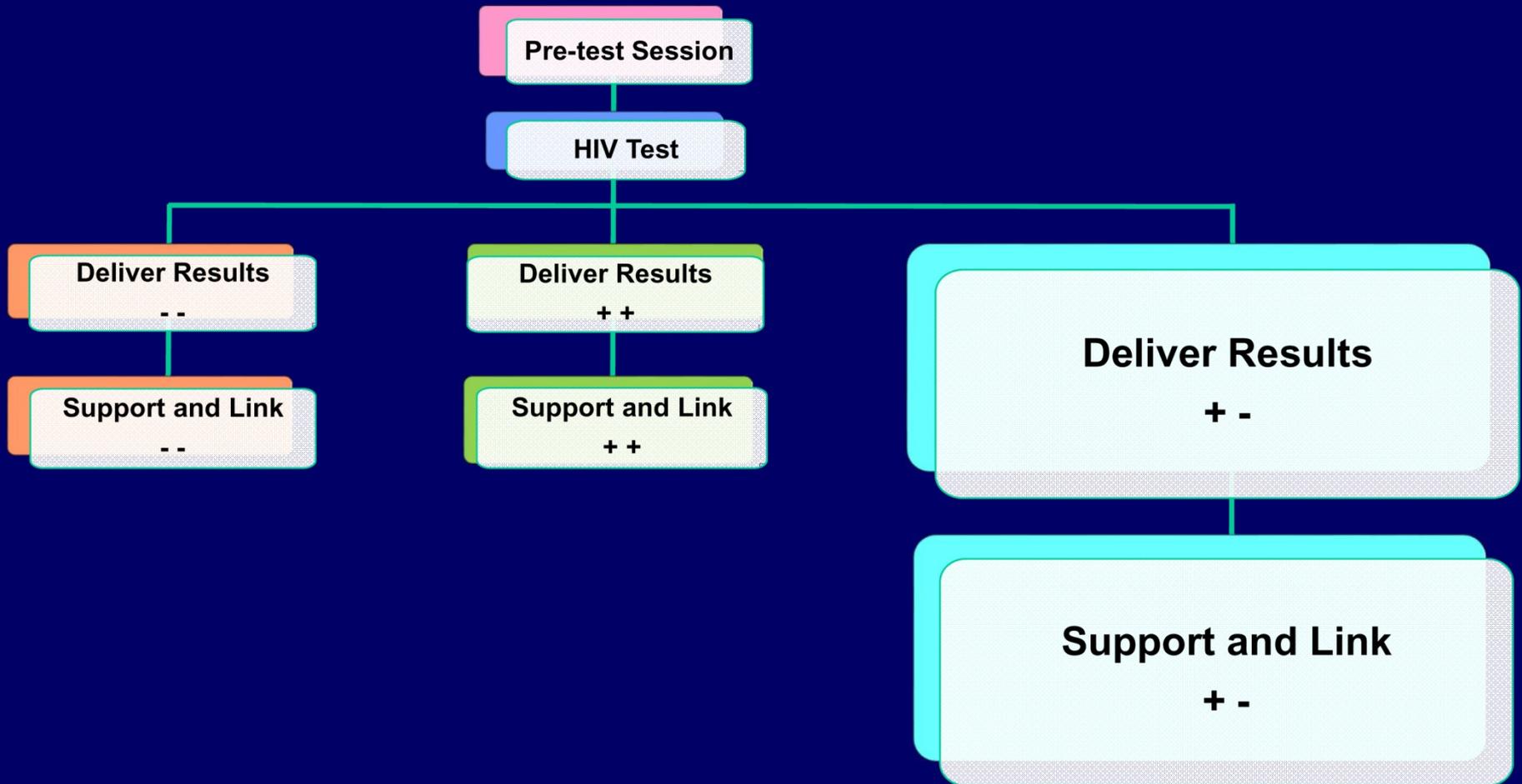
Factors That Affect Transmission of HIV

- ❖ Viral load
- ❖ Antiretroviral Therapy (ART)
- ❖ Condom use
- ❖ Sexual risk behavior
- ❖ Male circumcision
- ❖ STIs (sexually transmitted infection) or OIs (opportunistic infections)
- ❖ Frequency of contact
- ❖ Injuries to the genital tract
- ❖ Pregnancy
- ❖ Chance/probability

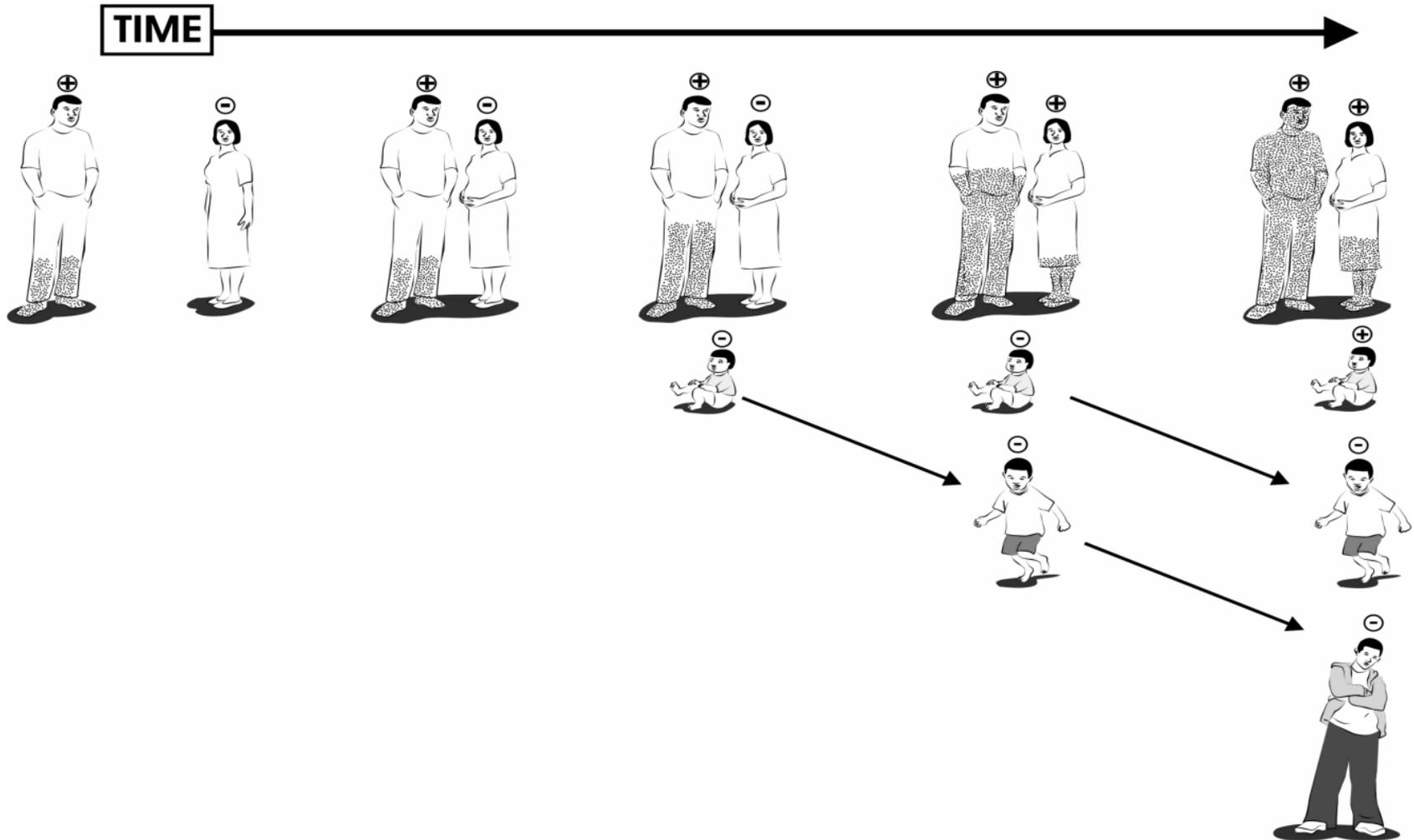
HIV Prevention in Discordant Couples

- ❖ CHTC supports couples to
 - learn their HIV status together
 - increase condom use,
 - reduce sex with outside partners
- ❖ CHTC contributes to PMTCT (prevention of mother-to-child HIV transmission) outcomes.
 - couples more likely to use ART following CHT.
- ❖ Many couples do change their behavior after CHTC.

Delivering Test Results to Couples: HIV-Discordant



HIV Transmission in the Family



Explaining Discordance

- ❖ How is it possible that I am HIV-positive and my partner is HIV-negative?

Explaining Discordance

Explanations about discordance should:

- ❖ Be clear and accurate
- ❖ Diffuse difficult discussions about being unfaithful and how the virus got in the relationship
- ❖ Dispel myths

Proper explanations can:

- ❖ Increase acceptance
- ❖ Enhance risk reduction

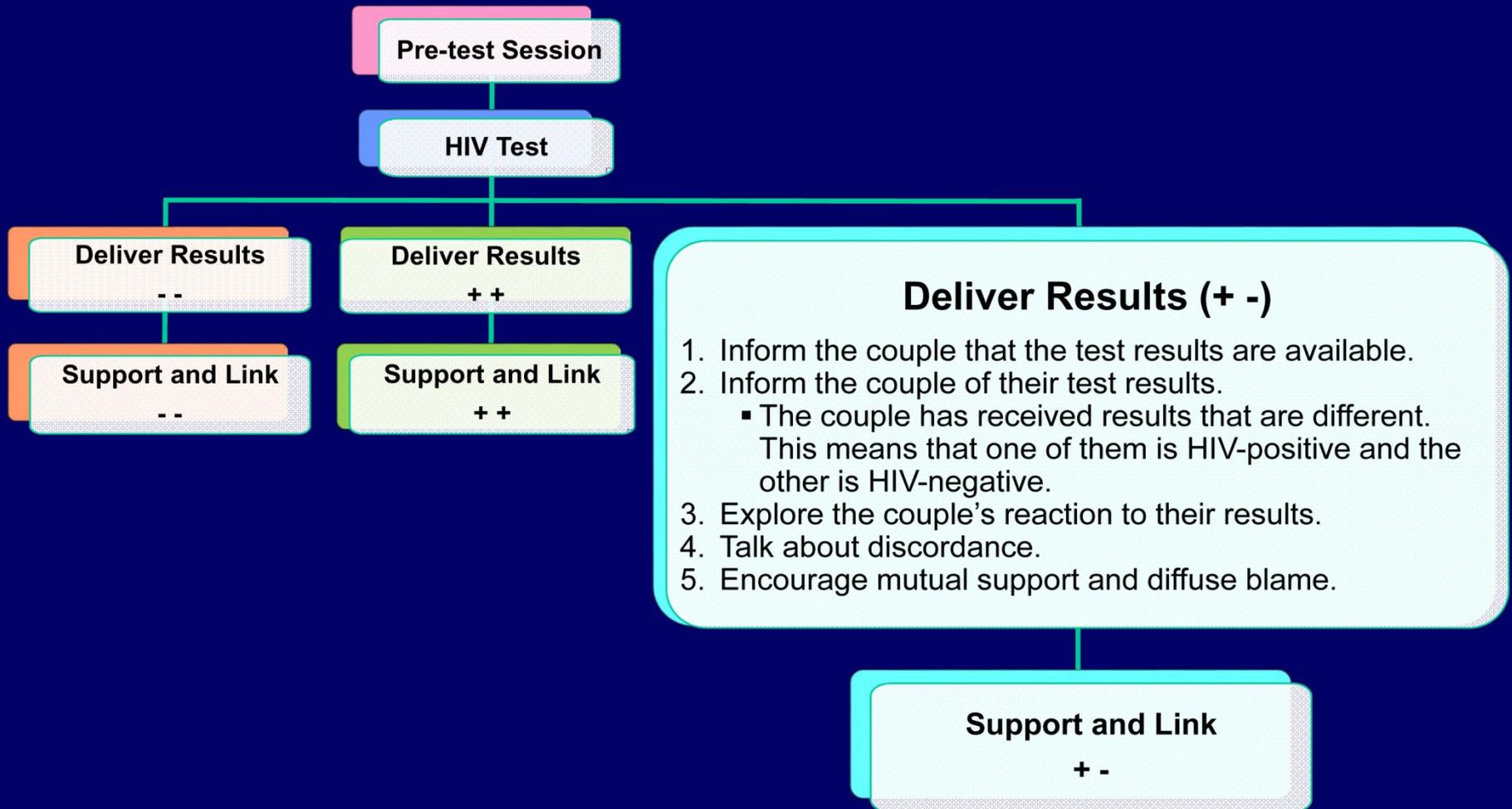
Communicating Discordance

- ❖ What providers say can affect each client in different ways and on many levels.
- ❖ Words, information and explanations can have several meanings and interpretations.
- ❖ A provider should assess how his/her messages may be heard, perceived, and interpreted.

Provider Goals for Post-test Session with HIV-Discordant Couples

- ❖ Ensure that couples understand and accept their test results and know what steps to take next
- ❖ Provide a clear and accurate explanation of discordance
- ❖ Encourage the couple to commit to risk reduction
- ❖ Ensure the couple understands the health and prevention benefits of receiving care and treatment
- ❖ Discuss mutual disclosure

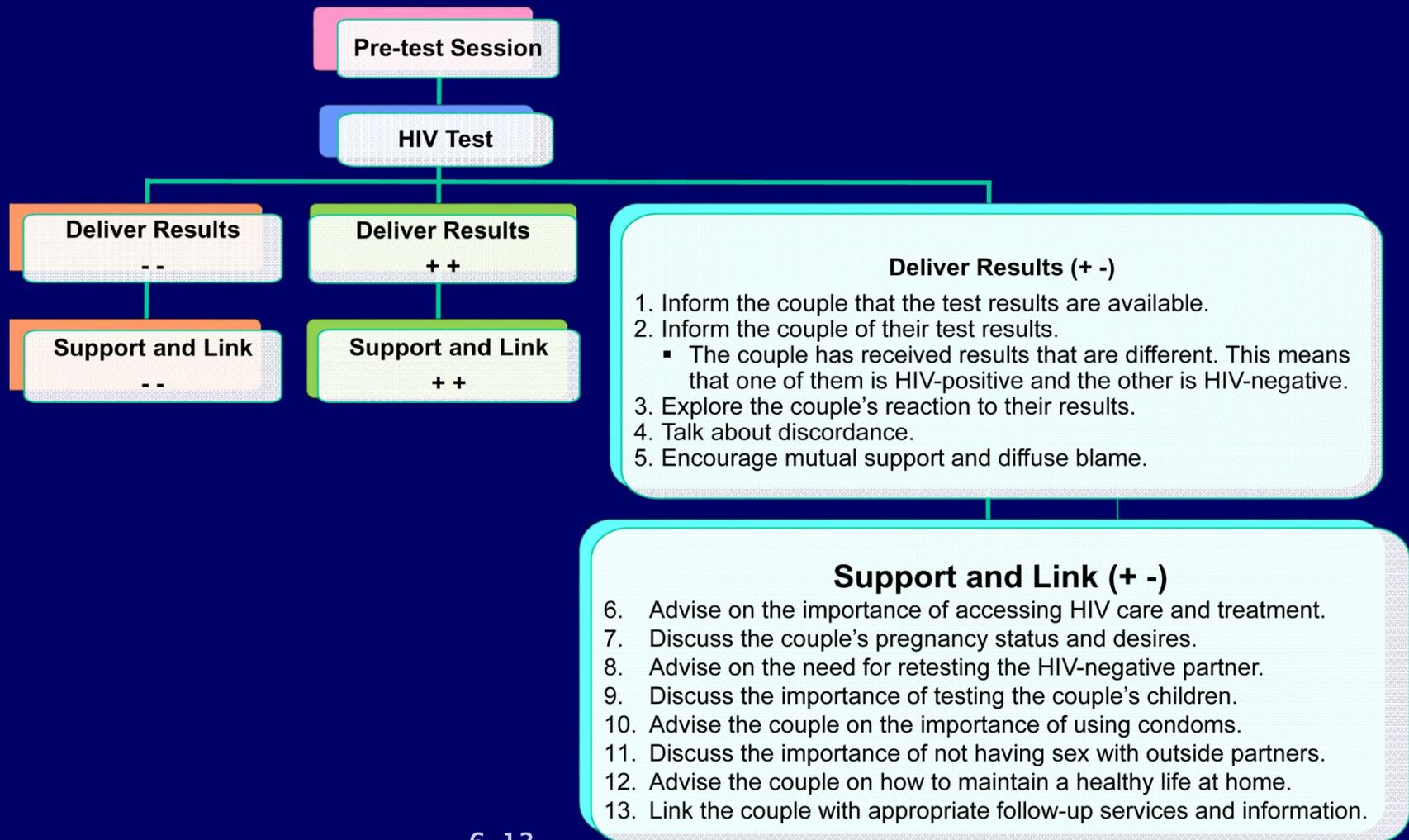
Delivering Test Results to Couples: HIV-Discordant



HIV-Discordant Couples: Providing Results

1. Inform the couple that the test results are available.
2. Inform the couple of their test results.
 - Test results are different. One partner is HIV-positive and one is HIV-negative.
3. Explore the couple's reaction to their results.
 - Allow the couple time to think about the results and ask any questions.
 - Assess the couple's feelings and reactions.
 - Answer any questions about the test results.
4. Talk about discordance.
5. Encourage mutual support and diffuse blame.

Delivering Test Results to Couples: HIV-Discordant



HIV-Discordant Couples: Providing Support and Linkages

6. Advise on the importance of accessing care and treatment for HIV.
 - Access treatment to stay healthy and live a long time.
 - If not eligible for treatment, still go to the clinic regularly.
7. Discuss the couple's pregnancy status and desires.
 - If HIV-positive woman pregnant, access PMTCT.
 - Plan safer pregnancy with the assistance of a provider.
 - Use contraception to prevent unplanned pregnancies.
8. Advise on the need for retesting the HIV-negative partner.
9. Discuss the importance of testing the couple's children.

HIV-Discordant Couples: Providing Support and Linkages (continued)

10. Advise the couple on the importance of using condoms.
 - Assess knowledge of how to use condoms.
 - Demonstrate and distribute condoms.
11. Discuss the importance of not having unprotected sex with outside partners.
12. Advise the couple on how to maintain a healthy life at home.
13. Link the couple with appropriate follow-up services and information.
 - Care and treatment clinic, PMTCT services
 - STIs, family planning
 - Male circumcision
 - Community organizations, support groups, VCT

Key Components of the CHTC Protocol

Pre-test Session for Couples

- Introduce the couple to CHTC.
- Emphasize that CHTC is voluntary.
- Remind the couples that test results are confidential.
- Remind the couples that declining CHTC will not affect their access to other health services.
- Describe the benefits of CHTC.
- Describe conditions for receiving CHTC and get couple agreement.
- Explain the three types of possible test results.
- Address the couple's questions and concerns.

HIV Test

Deliver Results (- -)

1. Inform the couple that the test results are available.
2. Inform the couple of their test results.
 - Both test results are negative, which indicates that neither partner is infected.
3. Explore the couple's reaction to their results.

Support and Link (- -)

4. Advise the couple on how to remain HIV-negative.
5. Advise on the need for retesting.
6. Assess the couple's knowledge of how to use condoms; demonstrate and distribute condoms.
7. Link the couple with appropriate follow-up services and information.

Deliver Results (+ +)

1. Inform the couple that the test results are available.
2. Inform the couple of their test results.
 - Both test results are positive, which means that both partners are infected.
3. Explore the couple's reaction to their results.
4. Encourage mutual support and diffuse blame.

Support and Link (+ +)

5. Advise on the importance of accessing HIV care and treatment.
6. Discuss the couple's pregnancy status/desires.
7. Discuss the importance of testing the couple's children.
8. Advise the couple on the importance of using condoms.
9. Discuss the importance of not having sex with outside partners.
10. Advise the couple on how to maintain a healthy life at home.
11. Link the couple with appropriate follow-up services and information.

Deliver Results (+ -)

1. Inform the couple that the test results are available.
2. Inform the couple of their test results.
 - The couple has received results that are different. This means that one of them is HIV- positive and the other is HIV-negative.
3. Explore the couple's reaction to their results.
4. Talk about discordance.
5. Encourage mutual support and diffuse blame.

Support and Link (+ -)

6. Advise on the importance of accessing HIV care and treatment.
7. Discuss the couple's pregnancy status and desires.
8. Advise on the need for retesting the HIV-negative partner.
9. Discuss the importance of testing the couple's children.
10. Advise the couple on the importance of using condoms.
11. Discuss the importance of not having sex with outside partners.
12. Advise the couple on how to maintain a healthy life at home.
13. Link the couple with appropriate follow-up services and information.