

**No matter who  
you are, this  
test is for you**



**HIV SCREENING. STANDARD CARE.™**

## Did you know...?



Today, more than **1.1 million people in this country have HIV**. Men, women, and people of all sexual orientations, all colors, and all ages are getting infected.

### How?



About **one in seven** people with HIV don't know they have it.

So they're not getting the treatment they need. And they may be passing HIV to others without knowing it.

**Know for sure. Get tested.**

## Testing is an important step toward staying healthy

**You can protect your health with three important steps:**

1. Get regular checkups.
2. Get tested to make sure you don't have any diseases that you don't know about, like HIV.
3. Follow your health care provider's advice.

**Simple, routine tests can save lives.**

HIV might not make you feel sick at first, so you may not know you have it. This is true of other health problems as well. For example, you can't feel high blood pressure, but it can damage your heart or cause a stroke. That's why your health care provider routinely checks your blood pressure.

**HIV testing is now a routine part of your physical exam.** Why? HIV causes AIDS, which could make you more likely to get serious infections and some cancers. Like routine blood pressure checks, routine HIV testing even if you feel well can lead to early diagnosis and treatment, so you have a better chance of not developing complications from AIDS.

**Most people test "negative" for HIV.**

This will mean that you don't have HIV. But if your test results are "positive," early HIV treatment could help you live a longer, healthier life.

## Anyone can get HIV

### **A person with HIV can look and feel healthy and still transmit it to others.**

Anyone who has ever had sex without a condom might have been exposed. The same is true of anyone who has ever injected drugs and shared a needle. Often, a person with HIV doesn't appear to be sick.

**HIV affects men and women of all ages in all types of neighborhoods—even married people or those in long-term relationships.** We can't know everything about our partners. Some people don't know they have HIV. Others think they were tested when they really weren't. And partners don't always tell everything. They may have had sex with other people, or injected drugs. For these reasons, it's best for everyone to have an HIV test. Ask your partner to get tested, too.

***People just like you get tested for HIV every day.***

## Everyone benefits from HIV testing

### **No matter what, you are better off knowing whether or not you have HIV.**

If you find out you don't have HIV, you can take steps to make sure you don't get HIV in the future.

**If your HIV test result is positive, health care providers can help you.** Even if you don't feel sick, you can get regular checkups and HIV medicine to help you live a longer, healthier life. And you can take care not to transmit HIV to your partner or baby.

### **Knowing if you have HIV is very important if you're planning a family.**

A woman with HIV can pass it to her baby during pregnancy, labor, or breastfeeding. Treatment could keep this from happening. Both women and men should be tested for their own sake, and for the sake of their future children.

# What you should know about the HIV test

**The test is simple. It doesn't take much time.** You have the right to say "no" to the test, but then you won't know for sure.

**Only an HIV test shows if you are infected with HIV.** Other routine blood tests you get during a physical exam don't show if you have HIV. Neither do tests for other sexually transmitted diseases (such as herpes, chlamydia, or gonorrhea).

**It may take up to three months for HIV antibodies (made by your body to fight the virus) to show up in a test.** If you get tested within three months after possible exposure, you could still have HIV, but it may not be detected. During this time period, which varies from person to person, you can still transmit HIV to others. Ask your health care provider whether you might need a follow-up test to be sure.

**An HIV test cannot protect you from being infected.** A negative test result does not mean you cannot get HIV or transmit it to others. If you think you may have been exposed to HIV after an HIV test, talk to your health care provider about getting another test and how to avoid transmitting HIV to others. You may also ask about post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), medication you can take after exposure to HIV to keep you from becoming infected.

**You might not have to pay for an HIV test.** Some clinics offer testing for free. In other places, there could be a charge. Ask your health care provider if you have any questions about the cost of the test.

There are different types of HIV tests.

Ask your health care provider which type you should have. **These test options are:**



test using blood from your vein or finger, or



rapid test using blood from your finger or a swab of your mouth (you could get results the same day).

# Ask about routine health tests today... and have an HIV test

Remember, health care providers who care for you want to help you stay healthy. Everyone should be tested for HIV at least once. People who are at high risk for HIV should be tested at least once a year. Anyone who is initiating a new sexual relationship or who receives a recommendation from their health care provider should be tested again for HIV.

So don't be afraid to ask questions, and please be honest with your health care provider.

**Knowing your HIV status early can make all the difference.**

## Glossary

### **HIV**

human immunodeficiency virus. HIV weakens the immune system and may cause AIDS. You can have HIV without getting AIDS if you get early treatment.

### **AIDS**

acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. AIDS is caused by HIV. Having AIDS means your immune system is very damaged. With AIDS, a person is more likely to get serious infections and certain types of cancer.

### **Immune System**

protects the body from illness and infection. The blood cells are part of the immune system and are most affected by HIV.

# Learn more about HIV and find out where to get tested in your area

Talk with your health care provider, or go online at <http://hivtest.cdc.gov> for a list of testing sites.

Contact CDC-INFO at [www.cdc.gov/info](http://www.cdc.gov/info) or by phone at 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) in English, en Español, Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Eastern time, closed Federal holidays. The number for callers with TTY equipment is 888-232-6348. Your call is free and private.



**Know for sure.  
Get tested.**

Do it for yourself and for the people you care about.

**More information:**

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or call 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636)



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