



I'm getting an HIV test because:

I've had an STD and I'm more vulnerable to contracting HIV.

I shared needles back in my party days.

I didn't use a condom.

I want to have kids and need to know how to protect my baby.

I've had multiple sex partners.

I can no longer use my fear of needles as an excuse not to get tested because there are needle free options now.

My husband had an affair and I just need to be sure.

I know what I did last summer. I just don't remember who.

I don't remember his name and who knows what else I don't know about him.

I thought we were monogamous, but I was wrong.

I'm out, proud and sexually active.

If I know my status, I can move on with my life.

I thought he would be more than a one night stand, but he wasn't.

He said using a condom would ruin the mood.

It's been 6 months since my last test, so it's time.

What's your reason?

Erase doubt about your HIV status. Get tested. Get treated. Free.

Is HIV in You?



EraseDoubt.org

800-367-AIDS
info@erasedoubt.org

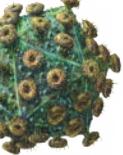


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Below are some frequently asked questions about HIV/AIDS. For additional information, visit EraseDoubt.org or call 800-367-AIDS.

What is HIV?

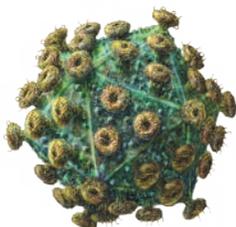
Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is the virus that weakens the immune system and causes HIV disease and AIDS. HIV stands for:

- H:** Human, because this virus can only infect human beings.
- I:** Immuno-deficiency, because the effect of the virus is to create a deficiency, a failure in the normal function of the immune system.
- V:** Virus, because the organism is a virus, which means one of its characteristics is that it is incapable of reproducing by itself. It needs a living cell to reproduce.

What is AIDS?

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is the life-threatening stage of HIV disease, also called Advanced HIV Disease. It is a medical diagnosis for someone whose immune system is so damaged that certain diseases (opportunistic infections) or cancers can develop. AIDS stands for:

- A:** Acquired; it is an acquired condition or infection, not something transmitted or inherited through the genes.
- I:** Immune; it affects the body's immune system, that part of the body which is responsible for protecting the body from germs such as bacteria, fungi and viruses.
- D:** Deficiency; it makes the immune system deficient (does not work properly).
- S:** Syndrome; someone with AIDS may experience a wide range of different diseases and opportunistic infections.



How is HIV transmitted?

The four common means of transmission are:

1. Unprotected sexual intercourse (anal, vaginal, oral).
2. Sharing of injection drug paraphernalia – including needles, syringes, cookers, and other injection equipment.
3. From an infected woman to her fetus (vertical or prenatal transmission), or to her child through infected breast milk (neonatal transmission).
4. Through other direct exposure to infected blood or needle sticks (occupational transmission) or tattoos or piercing with non-sterile equipment.

What are rapid HIV tests?

Rapid tests for detecting antibodies for HIV are screening tests that produce very quick results, usually in 20 to 40 minutes. Rapid tests can use oral, blood draw, or finger-stick methods to collect samples for testing. Standards of care in the United States say that a positive result with a rapid test (called preliminary positive) must be confirmed by another test before an HIV diagnosis can be given. People who receive a preliminarily positive result from the rapid test will be asked to undergo another test before they are confirmed as HIV positive. The confirmatory test may take up to two weeks to process.



What does a positive HIV test mean?

A positive test result:

- Does not mean you have AIDS.
- Does not mean you will necessarily get AIDS.
- Does not mean you are immune to AIDS, even though you have antibodies. It does mean that you can infect other people with HIV.

If I am HIV positive, where can I get information about treatments?

It is recommended that you be in the care of a doctor or medical service, ideally one with experience treating people living with HIV. Your doctor can provide information and guidance. Detailed information on specific treatments is also available from the HIV/AIDS Treatment Information Service (ATIS) at 1-800-448-0440. The HIV/AIDS Hotline can provide general information about HIV/AIDS and referrals to national treatment hotlines, local AIDS organizations, and HIV/AIDS-knowledgeable health care providers. The Hotline numbers are 1-800-367-2437 (English and Spanish) and 1-888-225-2437 (TTY).

Can a poor and uninsured person have access to treatment?

Everyone who is diagnosed with HIV has access to treatment and medications regardless of their income. An individual who tests positive for HIV and is subsequently diagnosed with AIDS, and is unable to work, is considered disabled. Where such a person is eligible, Medi-Cal pays for the treatment. A federal and state program called AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) pays for the medicines. To get more information on free treatment and medications for Los Angeles County residents, you can visit www.EraseDoubt.org or call 1-800-367-AIDS (2437).

