

What is HIV?

HIV is a virus that harms the body so it can't fight off germs and diseases. Many people don't know they have HIV because they look and feel healthy. You can have HIV for many years and not feel sick. The only way to know if you have HIV is to take a test.

How Do You Get HIV?

HIV is found in blood, semen, vaginal fluid, and breast milk. HIV can be passed from a person with HIV to another person when they

- have anal, vaginal or oral sex without a condom.
- share syringes, needles, cookers, cotton/filters, water or other injection supplies (works or rig).

HIV can also be passed from a mother to her baby during pregnancy, delivery or breastfeeding.

Do I Need an HIV Test?

You should get tested for HIV at least once if you are between 13 and 64 years old. Pregnant women should get an HIV test when they first find out they are pregnant, and again in the third trimester (last three months of pregnancy).

You should be tested once a year or more if you

- have anal, vaginal, or oral sex without a condom.
- have more than one sex partner.
- have a partner who has sex with other people.
- inject drugs, steroids or hormones not given to you by a doctor.
- share syringes, needles, cookers, cotton/filters, water or other injection supplies .
- have sex for money or drugs.
- have an STI (sexually transmitted infection such as syphilis, gonorrhea or chlamydia), Hepatitis, or TB (tuberculosis).

Sexually active gay and bisexual men and other men who have sex with men should get tested every three to six months.



To get more information about anything in this brochure or to find a test site near you call or email:

Disease Prevention Hotline

(800) 533-4148

hiv-stdhotline@vdh.virginia.gov

Monday – Friday, 8am - 5pm

Virginia HIV Resource and Referral List:

<http://bit.ly/1dJ27Df>



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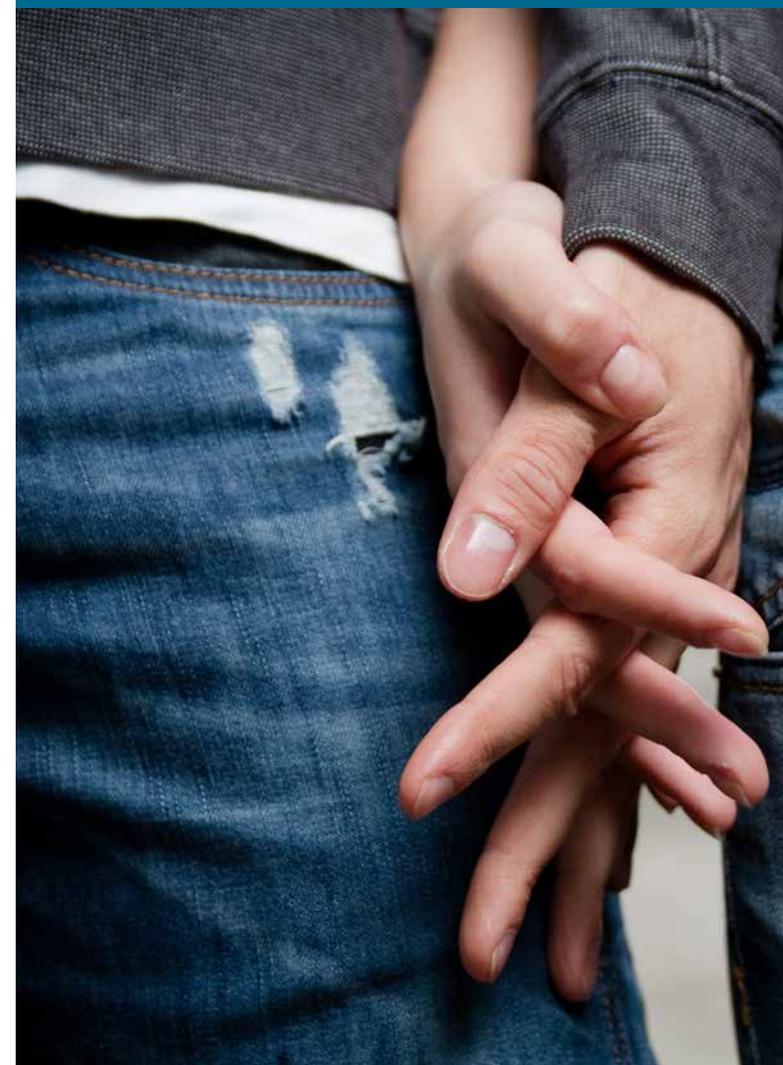
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HIV TESTING

What You Should Know

VDH: Division of Disease Prevention





What Kinds of HIV Tests are Available?

Conventional: A tube of blood is drawn from a vein (usually from your arm) and sent to a lab. It can take anywhere from 1 to 10 days to get your results back, depending on the lab.

Rapid: A little bit of blood is collected by sticking your finger or oral fluid is collected by swabbing the inside of your cheek and gums. Rapid test results are ready in 20 minutes or less. If you have a reactive (positive) test result, you will need another test to confirm that you have HIV.

Home Test Kits: You can buy a home test kit over the internet or in a store and test yourself. One home test uses oral fluid and you can get your results in about 20 minutes. If you have a positive test result, you will need to get another test through a clinic or doctor's office to confirm that you have HIV. Another home test uses a dried drop of blood that you mail to a lab. You can get your results over the phone in a few days.



How Soon Can I Be Tested?

Some tests can find HIV about two to four weeks after HIV gets into the body. Other tests can take as long as three months. Tell your test counselor about your risks and ask questions about when you should get tested again. If you use a home test kit, read the booklet or call the toll-free number that comes with the kit to find out about re-testing.

What if I Test Positive for HIV?

If your test result shows that you have HIV, it is important that you see a doctor as soon as possible. The sooner you get care, the less damage that HIV can do to your body. There is no cure for HIV, but if you take your HIV medicine every day and see your doctor regularly, you can live a long and healthy life. Taking your medicine every day can also stop HIV from passing to other people. If you need help finding a doctor or getting medicine for HIV, call the Disease Prevention Hotline at (800) 533-4148.

Have Questions?
Call the Disease Prevention Hotline

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hiv-stdhotline@vdh.virginia.gov



HIV TESTING

What if I Test Negative for HIV?

Talk to your test counselor or doctor about when you might need to get tested again.

Lower your chances of getting HIV.

- Use a new condom each time you have sex.
- If you inject drugs, use a sterile needle and syringe each time. Don't share your works or rig. If you can't get clean works, ask your test counselor about ways to lower your risk of getting HIV or other infections like Hepatitis.
- Stop or cut back on your use of other drugs and alcohol, especially when making decisions about sex. You can find help with stopping or reducing your drug and alcohol use by calling (800) 662-HELP (4357).

Find out if PrEP is right for you.

What is PrEP?

"PrEP" stands for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis. The word "prophylaxis" means to prevent or control the spread of an infection or disease. The goal of PrEP is to stop HIV from taking hold if you are exposed to the virus through sex or sharing works used to inject drugs. This is done by taking a pill every day. If you have HIV-positive sex partners, inject drugs, or have male sex partners who have sex with other men, you might want to use PrEP. PrEP works best when used with condoms. You will need to see a doctor, get some blood tests and take an HIV test every three months while on PrEP.