

Why is HIV testing important? - HIV testing, part 1

Knowing your HIV status can help keep you and others safe.

If you are HIV-negative:

- HIV-negative means that testing shows that you do **not** have HIV, and there are steps to prevent infection.
- You should continue using condoms during sex.
- You should consider taking PrEP, or pre-exposure prophylaxis, to prevent HIV if you are at high risk of becoming infected with HIV.



If you are HIV-positive:

- Testing shows that you are infected with HIV, but you can still take steps to protect your health.
- Begin by talking to your health care provider about ART, or antiretroviral therapy. ART is the use of HIV medicines to treat HIV infection.

People on ART take a combination of HIV medicines every day. ART helps people with HIV live longer, healthier lives.

ART also reduces the risk of transmission of HIV. People infected with HIV should start ART as soon as possible. Your health care provider will help you decide what HIV medicines to take.

The first step is to be tested so that you can make the right decisions for your health.

Be sure to get answers to any questions you have about HIV/AIDS. Your public health department, health care provider, and public library can help.



Text is from HIV/AIDS sources from the Department of Health and Human Services and adapted by HealthReach and Healthy Roads Media. This project has been funded in whole or in part with Federal funds by the National Library of Medicine award number HHSN2762015000111 awarded to the Center for Public Service Communications. Images from iStock.com.

Creation Date: March 2017