

## HIV and newborns - Pregnancy, part 5

A mother can pass HIV to her baby during pregnancy, while in labor, while giving birth, or by breastfeeding. The good news is that there are many ways to lower the risk of passing HIV to an unborn baby to almost zero.



Within 6 to 12 hours after birth, babies born to women with HIV receive an HIV medicine called zidovudine or Retrovir.

The HIV medicine protects the babies from infection with any HIV that may have passed from mother to child during childbirth.

Babies born to women with HIV are tested, usually at 14 to 21 days of life, at 1 to 2 months, and again at 4 to 6 months.



The HIV test used is called a virologic test and looks directly for the virus in the blood. Results from at least two HIV virologic tests are needed to know for certain whether a baby is HIV negative or HIV positive.

If testing shows that the baby does have HIV, the baby will be switched from zidovudine to ART, or antiretroviral therapy, as part of lifelong HIV care.

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.

