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# HIV Testing

## HIV Testing By the Numbers:

- Since the beginning of the epidemic, about 130,000 New Yorkers with HIV/AIDS have died.
- With advances in treatment, HIV is now a manageable illness. The annual number of deaths among people with AIDS has been about 2,000 since 2011.
- HIV testing is over 99% accurate and rapid HIV testing can give a result in 20 minutes.
- The Department of Health estimates that up to 22,000 New Yorkers living with HIV are not aware of their HIV status.

## Who Should Get Tested?

**Everyone should know their HIV status.** Since 2010, health care providers have been required to offer HIV testing as part of routine health care services to all patients ages 13 – 64.

People at risk of HIV infection include those who:

- Have multiple sex partners
- Have ever injected drugs
- Have ever had a sexually transmitted disease
- Have sex with a person living with HIV

## How Does HIV Testing Work?

The provider offering the HIV test will share information about HIV verbally, in writing or through a video. He or she will obtain the patient's verbal consent to conduct the test. There are different types of HIV tests. Some involve drawing blood, while others involve pricking the patient's finger or swabbing the mouth to get fluid. Some tests are "rapid tests" and the results are ready in 20 minutes. A person is only told that he or she has HIV infection if the test result is confirmed by a second or sometimes a third test. HIV test results are confidential.

## Where Can a Person Get Tested?

Everyone should talk to their doctor about having an HIV test. To access free HIV testing or testing where a name isn't given, call 1-800-541-AIDS (English) or 1-800-233-SIDA (Spanish).

## What if the Test Finds that the Person has HIV Infection?

The provider who gives the test result will explain the meaning of the test and arrange an appointment for HIV medical care. Education about how to avoid passing the virus to others is provided. In NYS, there are many resources to ensure that people with HIV can afford health care and HIV medications. Clinical guidelines suggest that all people with HIV begin treatment as soon as possible. Early treatment will prevent the virus from damaging a person's health and will help keep the person healthy.

**By getting tested for HIV, people can learn their HIV status, avoid passing the virus to others and be an important part of the plan to end the AIDS epidemic in New York.**