

HIV Testing

What is HIV?

HIV stands for human immunodeficiency virus. This infection makes it hard for the body to fight off germs (weakens the immune system). It is caused by a virus that is spread through contact with blood and body fluids. When an HIV infection gets out of control, it becomes AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome). In AIDS, the body can't fight off any germs, and the person may get life-threatening infections or cancers.

Good treatment can now control HIV and prevent AIDS. However, HIV has to be found early before the person gets sick from it. We are now testing people early for HIV, so treatment can start earlier. If we find a pregnant woman has HIV, we can protect the baby from getting it.

Why test for HIV?

Finding and treating HIV early can treat the infection before you get very sick. A person who has HIV may go on medicine right away, or the doctor may wait for the right time to start medicine.

Finding HIV early can also help you be careful so you don't give the infection to other people.

Do I have to be tested for HIV?

You may say you do not want to be tested. It is your choice. Talk to your doctor or nurse before you decide. Ask questions.

We keep the results of your HIV test private. However, HIV is an illness that can spread, and the public health department needs to keep track of these illnesses to control, treat, and prevent them. HIV is one of the illnesses doctors must report to the the Arizona Department of Health Services.

What might an HIV test show?

An HIV test can give one of these results:

Negative: means you may not be infected with HIV. If you have been exposed to the HIV virus within the last 3 to 6 months, you may be infected but the test result is negative.

Indeterminate: means you need to be tested again. This may mean you are infected with HIV, or it may mean the test is not clear (false cross reaction).

Positive: means you may be infected with HIV. You will be referred to a doctor who will test you again. If you have HIV, the doctor will talk to you about treatment.

What can I do to reduce my risk of getting or passing HIV?

Here are some ways to keep HIV from spreading:

- do not have sex
- always use a condom when having sex
- do not share needles (such as from drugs, steroids, or tattoos)
- make sure the needles used on you are clean
- use condoms correctly
- don't use alcohol or drugs that change your mood
- a mom with HIV can take medicine that lowers the chances of passing it on to the baby
- a mom with HIV can protect the baby by not breastfeeding



If you have any questions or concerns,
ask your child's doctor or your doctor.

For more information go to:
www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/aids.html

or

[www.phoenixchildrens.com/health-information/the-emily-center/
child-health-topics/aids.html](http://www.phoenixchildrens.com/health-information/the-emily-center/child-health-topics/aids.html)

If you want to know more about child health and illness,
visit our library at The Emily Center at Phoenix Children's Hospital
1919 East Thomas Road
Phoenix, AZ 85016
602-546-1400
866-933-6459
www.phoenixchildrens.com

Disclaimer

The information provided at this site is intended to be general information, and is provided for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of examination, treatment, or consultation with a physician. Phoenix Children's Hospital urges you to contact your physician with any questions you may have about a medical condition.

Friday, September 17, 2010 • DRAFT to family review
#1060 • Written by Julie Reisetter, RN, MS



The Emily Center

HIV Testing

Diagnostic Test/Exam

Si usted desea esta información en español, por favor pídasela a su enfermero o doctor.

Name of Health Care Provider: _____ Number: 1060

For office use: Date returned: _____ db nb

Family Review of Handout

Health care providers: Please teach families with this handout.

Families: Please let us know what you think of this handout.

Would you say this handout is hard to read? Yes No

easy to read? Yes No

Please circle the parts of the handout that were hard to understand.

Would you say this handout is interesting to read? Yes No

Why or why not?

Would you do anything differently after reading this handout? Yes No

If yes, what?

After reading this handout, do you have any questions about the subject? Yes No

If yes, what?

Is there anything you don't like about the drawings?

Yes No

If yes, what?

What changes would you make in this handout to make it better or easier to understand?

Please return your review of this handout to your nurse or doctor or send it to the address below.

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Thank you for helping us!