

# Should I Be Tested For HIV?



## HIV/AIDS Information Sheet

### Should I be tested for HIV/AIDS?

- Are you uncertain about your sexual partners' sex practices or drug use?
- Have you had sexually transmitted diseases?
- Have you shared needles to take drugs or other substances?
- Have you ever had anal sex?
- Have you had sex with someone infected with HIV/AIDS?

If you answered "yes" to any of those questions, you should be tested.

### Why should I be tested?

- To protect your health
- You can find out whether or not you can infect others.
- Regardless of the result, testing often increases a person's commitment to good health habits.
- If you do not have HIV, you may feel less anxious and take steps to protect yourself.
- If you do have HIV, it would allow you to begin treatment earlier as a means to slow the spread of HIV in your body and keep you from getting HIV-related illnesses. Many people who were diagnosed in the early stages of HIV infection can live healthy lives longer. It is most important to be tested and find out early, before you become ill.
- Women and their partners considering pregnancy can take advantage of treatments to potentially prevent transmission of HIV to the baby.

### I don't think I want to know if I have HIV.

It's better to find out now. It's easier to cope with HIV when you are healthy than when you are ill. You can also take advantage of support and other services that can help you to cope with HIV. You do not have to deal with it alone.

The counseling that is part of the HIV test will give you the information and support you need to assess your risk and deal with test results. Make sure you get the counseling and information you need before you are tested.

### I don't want to be tested because I don't want people to find out.

The doctor or nurse understands your need for privacy and confidentiality. Steps will be taken to ensure that your choice to be tested and the results of your test are kept private.