

HOW IS HIV TRANSMITTED?

The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) can be transmitted through:

- Blood
- Semen
- Vaginal secretions
- Breast milk

The most common method of HIV transmission in the United States is through anal, vaginal, or oral sex. HIV can also be transmitted through sharing intravenous (IV) devices or needles and from mother to child during breastfeeding.

**73% of MSU students had
0 or 1 sex partner
in the last year***

WHO SHOULD GET TESTED?

Those who have ever:

- Had unprotected sex without a condom
- Had or currently has a sexually transmitted infection
- Shared injection drug needles or syringes
- Received a blood transfusion or a clotting factor between 1978 and 1985

WHEN SHOULD I GET TESTED?

It normally takes at least 3 weeks to 3 months after being infected with HIV for the body to produce enough HIV antibodies to be detected by the ELISA test. This 3 week to 3 month time frame is called the window period.

While you can get tested at any time, your results should not be considered conclusive until three months after your last possible exposure to HIV.

WHAT OTHER TESTS ARE AVAILABLE?

It is important to know that not all sexually transmitted infections can be tested for. Use the following information as a guide; your counselor will discuss any of your concerns or questions related to these infections.

Chlamydia and gonorrhea

Both transmitted through contact with infected body fluids. Both can also be treated and cured with antibiotics.

Syphilis

Transmitted through body fluids and skin-to-skin contact. Can be treated and cured with antibiotics if detected early enough.

Herpes

Can be transmitted through contact with another's lesions as well as when no signs or symptoms are present. Can be treated through use of antivirals and topical ointments.

HPV/genital warts

Transmitted through skin-to-skin contact with another's lesions or cells that contain the virus. Lesions can be treated in a variety of ways.

Olin Health Center can also provide you with educational assistance and/or referral for any other sexual health questions or concerns you may have. Let your counselor know about any topics you would like more information about.

To schedule testing for sexually transmitted infections or a free and anonymous HIV test, call (517) 353-4660.

*2010 NCHA Survey, N=1468

**MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY**

The HIV Antibody Test

*Information to Know
Before You Test*

*Anonymous HIV testing is free to
all Michigan State University
students, faculty, and staff*

HIV counseling and testing is done by appointment only.

If you are unable to keep your scheduled appointment, kindly call and cancel so that someone else may use that time.



WHAT IS HIV COUNSELING & TESTING?

It includes education, counseling, a specimen sample (blood draw), two ELISA tests, a Western blot if necessary, and a post-test counseling session.

The initial counseling session is a 20-30 minute meeting with a certified HIV Counselor. Olin Health Center's laboratory will draw your blood specimen.

The sample is sent to a lab to have the HIV antibody test performed. The sample will take one week to be processed.

In order to receive your test results, you must return to Olin, in person, for a 10-15 minute post-test counseling session one week after your initial appointment. **Please call (517) 353-4660 to schedule an appointment.**

WHAT IS AN HIV ANTIBODY TEST?

Testing for HIV involves two different tests. Both tests are designed to detect antibodies that are produced in a person's body to fight HIV.

The first test is an ELISA (Enzyme-Linked Immunosorbent Assay) test, and it is run twice. If the ELISA yields two positive results, a Western Blot test is conducted. The Western Blot is used to confirm the results of a positive ELISA test. The Western Blot is much more specific and takes longer to perform.

A person is diagnosed with HIV if two ELISA tests and a Western Blot test react to HIV antibodies.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CONFIDENTIAL & ANONYMOUS TESTS?

The difference between an anonymous test and a confidential test is how the results are documented.

Anonymous testing gives you control over who knows your HIV status. When you test anonymously, you do not give your legal name. A specimen number, instead of your real name and date of birth, will identify you as an anonymous tester.

A confidential test requires that you use your legal name, date of birth, and student ID #. This means that your test results will be put in your medical record at Olin Health Center. Your results can be disclosed to others if you grant written permission.

It is recommended that all testers test anonymously unless formal documentation of the test is needed for travel, Peace Corps, a Visa, etc.



HOW ACCURATE IS THE TEST?

The HIV antibody tests are extremely accurate. However, on a few occasions the ELISA test may give "false positive" or "false negative" test results.

A "false positive" will occur when the ELISA test reacts positive for HIV antibodies when the body does not actually have any HIV antibodies. Due to the possibility of a false positive, an individual is not diagnosed with HIV until two ELISA tests and a Western Blot test all react to HIV antibodies.

A "false negative" is possible if the test is conducted before the body has enough time to produce HIV antibodies due to recent infection.

IF I TEST NEGATIVE, DOES THAT MEAN MY PARTNER IS ALSO HIV NEGATIVE?

NO. Your negative status does not necessarily mean that your partner will test negative for HIV. This is true even if you and your partner have had unprotected sex.

HIV is not always transmitted with every exposure. Both partners should be tested after the window period in order to confirm their negative status.

21% of MSU students have been tested for HIV*

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF KNOWING MY HIV STATUS?

Knowing the results of your HIV test can alleviate the stress and anxiety of thinking that you may be infected but not knowing your actual HIV status.

If you test negative for HIV, you can make decisions and take steps that will help you remain HIV negative.

If you test positive for HIV, you can seek medical treatment earlier. Early medical treatment can slow the progress of HIV and delay the onset of AIDS. Pregnant women who test positive for HIV can take action to prevent their baby from becoming infected with HIV.

Knowing your HIV status will help you to reduce the risk of transmitting the virus to others.