

Why is it worth to get a test for HIV?

If you are HIV negative, you will know how to reduce risk of becoming infected and what preventive measures should be used?

If you are HIV positive, you will be able to get timely treatment and slow progression of the infection.

If you are HIV positive and pregnant, effective treatment will help you to prevent HIV transmission to your baby.

If you know your HIV status, you can protect other persons.

HIV spreads:

1) through sexual intercourse (vaginal, anal, oral).

HIV transmission through sexual intercourse increases when:

« one of partners has a sexually transmitted infection (chlamydia, herpes, syphilis, gonorrhoea and others);

« having sex during menses;

« one of partners has mechanical lesions of mucous membrane (genital, rectum, mouth);

« sex was forced (in case of rape);

« having sex for the first time;

« one of partners has primary HIV infection or AIDS, when biological fluids (sperm, genital discharge) contain the highest concentration of HIV.

2) during blood transfusion, when infected blood is received; intravenous drug use when sharing needles and syringes with HIV positive person.

3) from mother to child (during pregnancy, delivery or breast feeding).

An effective treatment and appropriate measures (Caesarean section, refusing to breast-feed) reduce the risk of HIV transmission from HIV positive women to a child to a minimum.

HIV does not spread:

1) through air, water and food. HIV cannot be transmitted through coughing, sneezing, kissing.

2) through daily contacts, sweat, tears, sharing the same toilet, bath, pool, eating tools with HIV positive person. HIV is not transmitted by touching, playing, living with HIV positive person, eating food, which was made by an infected person.

3) through bites of insects. Mosquitoes, mites or other insects do not transmit HIV.

To get tested for HIV or other sexually transmitted infections you should visit dermatovenereologist or your family doctor.

If you have any doubts get tested for HIV immediately!



Get a test for HIV Protect yourself and your partner

Spread of Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is associated with human intercommunication. We should all be concerned to curb the spread of HIV infection.

ULAC

**CENTRE FOR COMMUNICABLE
DISEASES AND AIDS,**

Address: Nugaletojų str. 14 D, LT-10105 Vilnius,

Telephone: (8-5) 230 0125,

E-mail: ULAC@ULAC.LT

www.ulac.lt

What is HIV and what is AIDS?

HIV is a human immunodeficiency virus. After access into organism, virus destroys the immunity. HIV affects only human cells (T-lymphocytes). HIV causes a disease, the final stage of which is AIDS acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. AIDS does not occur immediately after becoming infected. Infected people can live for a long time (10 years on average) feeling healthy without any symptoms of the disease. HIV is transmitted even when the symptoms do not occur. AIDS is diagnosed on the basis of certain clinical signs and laboratory results. If HIV infection is not diagnosed and treated timely, it can lead to death.

Does vaccine against HIV exist?

Unfortunately, vaccine against HIV has not been developed yet.

How to know HIV status?

Testing for HIV is the only way to know HIV status. For that purpose venous blood needs to be taken. You can ask a doctor about possibility to take another kind of sample.

HIV test

HIV is determined by methods which can detect antibodies against HIV or HIV genetic material (DNA/RNA). Antibodies can be detected after 3-4 weeks or even few months after becoming infected. Period from the moment of becoming infected to the moment when antibodies occur is called window period or incubatory period.

Test result can be negative, unclear and positive.

Negative result means that antibodies are not found. Because of the window period it is recommended to repeat the test after 3 months. Negative result does not mean that a person can continue being irresponsible. It is time to consider one's risk behaviour and change in it.

Unclear result. There are many reasons for this result. Testing must be repeated. A doctor will tell about the meaning of this result and explain what to do next.

Positive result means that antibodies against HIV are found. To confirm the diagnosis a confirmative test is necessary. This test is prescribed by a doctor and venous blood needs to be taken. Positive result of this test means that you are infected.

HIV test is recommended if you:

- « had sex (vaginal, anal, oral) with an infected person or a casual partner (a person you hardly know or commercial sex worker);
- « had sex with person, who is a drug user;
- « had or have sex with partner, who had many partners;
- « had anal sex;
- « used or use intravenous drugs;
- « have got syphilis, gonorrhoea, chlamydia or other STI;
- « have suffered from sexual violence;
- « have injured yourself with a contaminated needle;
- « are pregnant;
- « have a fever, cough or diarrhea for more than a month;
- « often have pneumonia, bronchitis;
- « have lost weight without a reason;
- « always feel fatigue and weakness;
- « sweat a lot at night;
- « have got tuberculosis;
- « have Herpes simplex virus infection: chronic ulcers continuing longer than a month;
- « lymph nodes of neck, armpit or groin are increased;
- « have other suspicions or your are advised by your doctor.