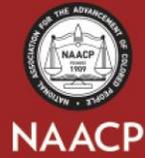




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The Importance of HIV Testing

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that more than 1.2 million people in the United States are living with HIV, yet nearly 1 in 7 (14%) people living with HIV are unaware of their statusⁱ. In fact, African Americans are most affected by HIV and account for an estimated 44% of all new HIV infections in the U.S.ⁱⁱ All people should know their HIV status, but many do not.

Experts recommend voluntary, opt-out routine HIV screening in health-care settings for all adults, and repeat screening at least annually for those at high risk. Pregnant women and newborns whose mother's HIV status is unknown should also be tested.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force gives a "Grade A" recommendation for HIV testing for everyone 15-65 years old. Younger adolescents and older adults with increased risk should also be tested.ⁱⁱⁱ This means, under the Affordable Care Act, insurers will be required to cover HIV screening. This is in line with the 2006 CDC HIV testing recommendations, and is a positive step forward in making HIV screening a routine medical practice.

It is important to know your HIV status for these reasons:

- Many new HIV infections are caused by people unaware that they are infected.
- HIV medicines are more effective if you start them early.
- Starting treatment early can mean the best health for you and a longer time before you develop AIDS or other infections. Unfortunately, most people do not find out they have HIV until the disease is at advanced stages. This limits the treatment options.

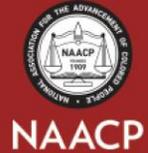
Though many Americans still don't know they have HIV, more people are getting tested than ever before. If you don't know your status, it's time to find out. Testing is quick and easy, and there are many places to get tested: HIV testing centers, health departments, hospitals, private doctors' offices, and clinics. To get tested:

- Ask your doctor to do the test. Also, if you go to a doctor for an illness, injury, or pregnancy, he or she may offer you an HIV test.
- Ask your doctor where to find a local HIV testing site.
- Visit the [National HIV and STD Resources](#) website to find a local testing site.
- Visit [AIDSVu](#) to see the prevalence of HIV in your community and [find a testing site](#).
- Call CDC-INFO at 800-232-4636 or 888-232-6348 (TDD) to find a local testing site.
- Call your [state HIV/AIDS hotline](#) to find a testing site.

If you test negative, you can take steps to stay that way. If you find out that you are infected with HIV, treatment can slow down the progress of the virus. If you are pregnant, you also will be able to help prevent passing HIV to your baby. You can tell your sex partners if you have HIV and protect them from getting the virus.



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Additional Information HIV Testing

Other publications and websites

- [CDC Get Tested](#) – This website has information and resources on HIV testing, including a national database of HIV testing sites. It also provides basic information about HIV/AIDS and behaviors that place a person at risk of infection.
- [Testing HIV Positive — Do I Have AIDS?](#) – This publication explains what an HIV-positive test result means and the difference between HIV and AIDS.
- [Testing Yourself for HIV-1 Questions and Answers](#) – This resource from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration gives information on the FDA-approved home HIV test, how it works, and its reliability. It also warns consumers about home tests that are not FDA-approved.
- [The Check \(Planned Parenthood\)](#) – STDs are very common and often do not cause symptoms. Answer simple anonymous questions on this page and find out if you should get tested for chlamydia, gonorrhea, or HIV.

Other Organizations

- [AIDS InfoNet](#)
- [AIDS.gov](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, HHS](#)
- [National HIV and STD Testing Resources](#)
- [National Prevention Information Network, CDC](#)

ⁱ CDC. Monitoring selected national HIV prevention and care objectives by using HIV surveillance data—United States and 6 U.S. dependent areas—2011. [HIV Surveillance Supplemental Report 2013](#); 18(No. 5). Published October 2013.

ⁱⁱ CDC. HIV among African Americans. Page last updated: April 3, 2015. <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk/raciaethnic/aa/facts/index.html>.

ⁱⁱⁱ U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. “Screening for HIV; Current Recommendations.” March 2015. <http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/uspshivi.htm>.