

Information on Nonreactive HIV Test Results

You have received a nonreactive HIV test result today. This almost always means you are not living with HIV.

Can you be infected with HIV even though the result was nonreactive?

There is a period between the time of infection and the time that an HIV test can detect HIV infection. If you have engaged in risk behaviors for HIV during the month prior to your test, you should speak to your provider about your need to be re-tested for HIV.

What actions put you at risk for getting HIV and/or sexually transmitted infections (STIs)?

- Engaging in anal, vaginal or oral sex without a condom or dental dam.
- Sharing unclean drug paraphernalia like syringes and cookers, or sharing unclean needles used for tattoos and body piercing.
- The use of drugs and/or alcohol can also put you at risk by making it harder for you to practice safe behavior.

If you are planning to have a baby, or are pregnant:

Even if you are nonreactive today, testing and retesting of both the pregnant person and sex partners may be indicated based on risk factors for HIV. It is important to know your HIV status because HIV can be passed to your baby during pregnancy, delivery or through breastfeeding.

A nonreactive test result provides opportunities to protect yourself from HIV:

- **Abstain** - Not having sex or sharing needles, syringes or other drug injection equipment with a person who has HIV or whose HIV status you don't know is a sure way to protect yourself from HIV.
- Use a latex male condom or a female condom. Condoms work very well to prevent HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases if you use them the right way, every time you have sex.
- **PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis)** is a medication that can prevent HIV infection. If you are at risk for HIV, taking PrEP as prescribed by a health care provider can greatly reduce your risk of HIV. PrEP is available as a daily pill, or as a pill you take right before and after you have risk, or as an injection. Ask your provider if PrEP may be right for you.
- **PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis)** is an emergency medication that can protect you from HIV if you take it as soon as possible after the exposure, ideally within 2 hours and no later than 72 hours after an exposure. If you are HIV-nonreactive and think you were exposed to HIV through sexual or needle sharing contact with someone who has or might have HIV, go immediately to an emergency room and ask for PEP, OR call one of the following PEP hotlines where you can consult with a medical provider and, if you need PEP, they will call in the prescription to pharmacy near you.
PEP HOTLINES: Outside NYC: 844-PEP4NOW (844-737-4669) In NYC: 844-3-PEPNYC (844-373-7692)
- **Be sober** - Using drugs or alcohol causes changes in awareness, attitude, consciousness, and behavior and can lower your ability to make decisions about safer sex and using clean needles and works.
- If you use needles or syringes:
 - Use new needles and equipment each time **and don't share anything, including cotton or water**.
 - Have naloxone available to prevent deaths opioid overdose. Most heroin, some pills, cocaine, and methamphetamine may contain fentanyl. **Learn about resources to test what's in the drug**.
 - Do not share needles for ear piercing, body piercing or tattooing.
 - NEVER buy needles on the street, even if they look new.
- Expanded Syringe Access Programs provide needles and syringes at pharmacies and other locations: https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/consumers/prevention/needles_syringes/esap/overview.htm
- Syringe Exchange Programs, Drug User Health Hubs provide support services, injection equipment, naloxone and fentanyl/xylazine test strips free of charge. https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/redesign/mrt8401/harm_reduction_seps.htm