



HIV Antibody Testing

What is an HIV test?

HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. This virus can lead to Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

A typical HIV test determines the presence or absence of HIV antibodies in the blood. Presence of such antibodies usually indicates that the individual has contracted HIV.

YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO DECLINE TAKING AN HIV TEST.

How long after a possible exposure should I wait to get tested for HIV?

HIV testing measures the antibodies your body makes against HIV. It can take several weeks to several months for the immune system to produce enough antibodies to be detected in an HIV test.

Most people who are infected with HIV will test positive within 2-8 weeks of exposure (according to the Centers for Disease Control). Even so, the large majority of people take up to 3 months to make enough antibodies to test positive and in some rare cases, it can take up to six months. Therefore, *it is important to repeat testing* if you feel like you have put yourself at risk within the last 3 months before getting tested.

What if my HIV test result comes back negative?

- A negative test indicates that there are NO ANTIBODIES PRESENT AT THAT TIME.
- BUT REMEMBER, there is a period of time when a person could be infected with the virus, but still test negative.
- Therefore it is IMPORTANT TO BE REGULARLY TESTED for HIV if you continue to engage in behavior that puts you at risk.

A NEGATIVE TEST DOES NOT MEAN IMMUNITY TO HIV.

What if my HIV test result comes back positive?

- A POSITIVE TEST INDICATES THE PRESENCE OF ANTIBODIES TO THE VIRUS.
- Many PEOPLE WHO TEST POSITIVE WILL LOOK AND FEEL FINE.
- There are NUMEROUS TREATMENT OPTIONS AVAILABLE for someone who tests positive for HIV, and the sooner someone with HIV is evaluated the better.
- It's recommended that HIV-infected individuals SEEK EVALUATION PROMPTLY with an HIV infectious disease specialist, get tested for other sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis, and use condoms.
- The infectious disease specialist will PERFORM ADDITIONAL TESTS to see if the HIV positive individual may benefit from antiviral therapy.
- There are MANY MEDICATIONS AVAILABLE to successfully keep the amount of virus at very low levels, allowing the immune system to keep functioning.
- HIV infected individuals are also ADVISED TO STOP OR REDUCE SMOKING CIGARETTES, DRINKING ALCOHOL EXCESSIVELY, AND/OR USING DRUGS - all of which can weaken the immune system.

Is an HIV test 100% certain?

No, HIV testing is not 100% certain, false positives and false negative results do occur rarely.

A **FALSE NEGATIVE** is when the test result comes back negative, even though someone is infected with HIV. This does not happen often and it usually occurs in recently infected persons who are tested before their body has developed enough antibodies to be detected in the HIV test.

A **FALSE POSITIVE** is when the test result comes back positive, even though someone is not infected with HIV. This occurs in only 1% of HIV tests and can be due to other diseases.

Is my HIV test result confidential and anonymous?

All testing at Student Health Services is confidential but not anonymous.

ANONYMOUS TESTING is when the medical staff does not know your name. Anonymous testing is available through the County of San Diego. For referrals to anonymous testing sites, call 619-296-2120.

Student Health Services offers **CONFIDENTIAL TESTING**, meaning that your medical information cannot be released without your written authorization, except in the case of a positive test result. SDSU providers are required by law to report the names of persons who test positive for HIV to the County of San Diego.

How do I get my results?

IF YOU WERE TESTED AT STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES, THEY WILL ONLY CONTACT YOU IF YOUR RESULTS NEED TO BE DISCUSSED.

Your results should be available in 4 business days. If you were tested at Student Health Services, please call 619-594-5281 to talk to your provider, or make an appointment to get your results in person. If you were tested at another location, please follow their instructions to receive your results.

HIV testing options?

There are three types of HIV antibody testing methods:

STANDARD BLOOD TEST (AVAILABLE AT STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES)

- A sample of blood is drawn from the arm.
- Results are normally available in 4 days but may take up to two weeks.
- This is the routine HIV test used by most clinics.

RAPID ORAL SWAB TESTING (ORAQUICK)

- A sample of oral fluids is obtained with a cheek/gums swab.
- Results are available in 20 minutes.
- This is offered at outside clinics and may be an option for people with poor veins or needle phobias who want results immediately.

RAPID BLOOD TESTING

- A blood sample is obtained by a finger prick.
- The results for HIV rapid testing are usually available within 10 – 60 minutes.
- This is an option for people who wish to know their results immediately instead of waiting up to two weeks.

There is also an HIV viral load testing method:

THE EARLY TEST

- A blood sample detects the HIV virus, *not the antibodies*.
- Results are available in two weeks.
- You should wait at least 9 days after a possible exposure before requesting viral load testing.
- This test is a good option for a person who engages in high risk sexual behavior or someone who wants more immediate HIV results. Knowing infection status sooner can reduce anxiety, allow for more effective treatment, and protect partners.
- This test is offered through the UCSD Antiviral Research Clinic (AVRC) for free.

HIV IS THE VIRUS THAT CAUSES ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME (AIDS). THIS TEST IS NOT A TEST FOR AIDS.

San Diego County HIV Testing Sites (*The testing sites will stop accepting clients when capacity is met*)

Anonymous & Confidential testing:

SAN DIEGO LGBT COMMUNITY CENTER*

3909 Centre St. San Diego, 92103

Phone number:

(619) 692-2077

Rapid testing available:

Yes

Note:

UCSD AVRC is providing the confidential “Early Test” (HIV testing one week after exposure) at this site.

Confidential testing:

COUNTY HEALTH SERVICES COMPLEX*

3851 ROSECRANS ST. SAN DIEGO, CA 92110

Phone number:

619-296-2121

Rapid testing available:

Yes

NORTH PARK FAMILY HEALTH CENTER

3544 30th Street, San Diego, CA 92104

Phone number:

619-515-2424

Rapid testing available:

Yes

CENTRAL REGION PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER*

5202 UNIVERSITY AVE., SAN DIEGO, CA 92105

Phone number:

(619) 229-5400

Rapid testing available:

Yes

UCSD ANTIVIRAL RESEARCH CENTER

220 Dickinson Street, Suite A, San Diego 92103

Phone number:

619-543-8080

Rapid testing available:

Yes

Note:

The main site to get “The Early Test”
Call for an appointment

NORTH COASTAL PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER*

104 SOUTH BARNES ST., OCEANSIDE, CA 92054

Phone number:

(760) 967-4401

Rapid testing available:

No

SOUTH REGION PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER*

690 OXFORD ST. CHULA VISTA, CA 91911

Phone number:

(619) 409-3110

Rapid testing available:

No

SAN YSIDRO HEALTH CENTER

4004 Beyer Blvd., San Ysidro, California 92173

Phone number:

619-428-4463

Rapid testing available:

No

SAN DIEGO AMERICAN INDIAN HEALTH CENTER

2630 1st Ave., San Diego, California 92103

Phone number:

619-234-2158

Rapid testing available:

Yes

Note:

Everyone Welcome. ADAP (AIDS Drug Assistance Programs) and Ryan White Specialist.

**Clinics charge \$15.00 for STD screening. If you are getting HIV testing only or if you are unable to pay, the fee may be waived.*

Visit HIVtest.cdc.gov for more information

