

Why is it important to get tested six monthly?

HIV is treatable. You can live a well and normal life with HIV if you receive the correct treatment and care



Signs and symptoms?

Illness can be like any mild illness initially with:

- Fever
- Rash
- Enlarged Lymph nodes
- Joint pain



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Patient
Tutorial

What is HIV?

It is a virus that destroys important cells in your body needed to defend your body and fight infections and prevent cancer. If you don't receive treatment early then too many of your defenses are destroyed and your body will not be able to fight and protect you.

What is AIDS?

If HIV is left untreated the 'defense' cells are destroyed. The body can't fight infections, cancer and HIV. The HIV then leads to AIDS. If left untreated you will die



Why is counseling important?

If result Negative (no HIV) – counseling on safe sex and how to avoid infection.

If Positive result (HIV present) – the person can discuss the results, different treatment options and follow up needed by your health care provider. Life style changes and support options will be discussed



How do we test for HIV?

1. Rapid HIV – 1/2 test – finger prick test testing for antibodies, only positive after 4 weeks of infection
2. 4th Generation HIV – 1/2 Elisa test – blood sample from the vein, test for antibodies and viral protein, only positive 18 -21 days after infected.
3. HIV – 1 PCR test – blood sample from the vein, test for virus, positive 14 – 16 days after infected

Treatment of HIV?

1. Regular blood tests like CD4 count will be done
2. Various medications are available and will be prescribed according to your blood results
3. A Healthy diet
4. Regular medical visits
5. Flu vaccinations during winter

What is a window period?

A positive result is normally not seen in your blood immediately after infection. It normally takes a few days for the infection to show up in your blood. This gap is called the 'window period'.



How to avoid infection?

1. Only have one sexual partner
2. Use condoms when having intercourse
3. Cover open cuts when handling other peoples blood
4. Infected pregnant mothers should tell their doctors – they will take precautions to limit transfer of infection to baby

