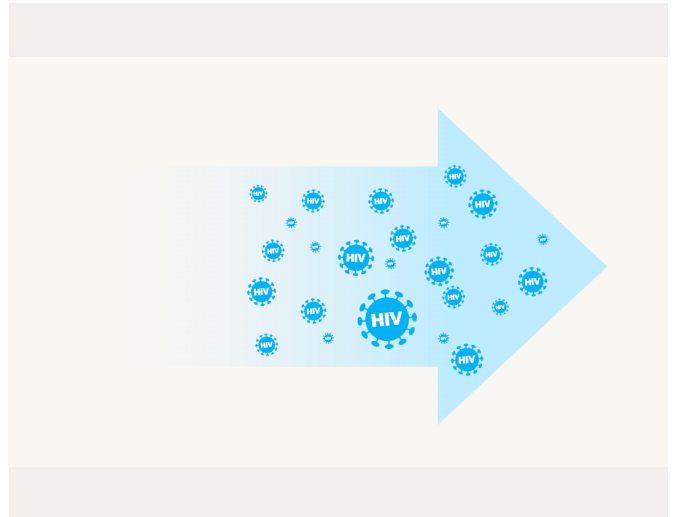


# Factsheet What are the symptoms of seroconversion?

## Key points

- The symptoms of recent HIV infection are the same in men and women.
- A flu-like illness may appear within a month of infection.
- The most common symptoms are fever, swollen glands, muscle aches and tiredness.



Once infected with HIV, **the virus** takes hold in your body by multiplying rapidly. Your immune system responds by producing antibodies in response to the virus. This period is known as **seroconversion**. Antibodies appear within one to two weeks and will continue to increase in the months after infection. Seroconversion takes place within three weeks in the majority of infected individuals.

Seroconversion is often, but not always, accompanied by a flu-like illness. This happens in at least half of the people infected with HIV, but may happen in as many as 80-90% of all infections. Symptoms typically appear within a month of infection and tend to go away within two to three weeks.

*"These symptoms are not a reliable way to identify seroconversion, to diagnose HIV infection or to rule it out. You need to take an HIV test."*

Symptoms may include:

- Fever
- Swollen glands
- Muscle aches

- Tiredness
- Body rash (usually reddish, small flat blemishes that are not itchy)
- Oral thrush
- Weight loss
- Joint pains
- Sore throat
- Gastrointestinal symptoms, such as vomiting and diarrhoea
- Headache
- Genital sores or thrush
- Night sweats
- Nervous system involvement (meningitis or encephalitis).

The most commonly experienced symptoms are **fever, swollen glands, muscle aches** and **tiredness**.

These symptoms are not a reliable way to identify seroconversion, to diagnose HIV infection or to rule it out. There are many other illnesses that can cause symptoms such as these. Some people do not notice any symptoms after infection.

An **HIV test** needs to be done in order to confirm HIV infection. This is the only reliable way of knowing whether you have HIV or not.

## Find out more

**Very recent infection** Basic leaflet with pictures

**Acute and primary HIV infection** Simple factsheet

**Information for people recently diagnosed with HIV** Simple factsheet