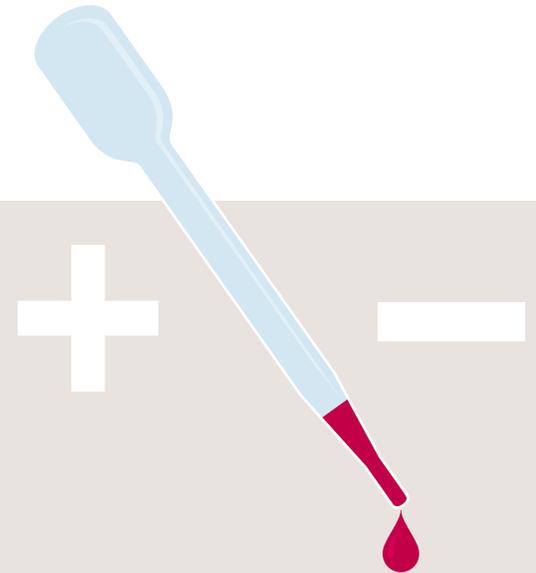


# The basics Testing



**NAM**  
77a Tradescant Road  
London SW8 1XJ  
**Phone:** 020 3242 0820  
**Website:** www.aidsmap.com  
**E-mail:** info@nam.org.uk  
**Charity number** 1011220

**With thanks to the staff and service users at the following organisations, for the feedback that shaped these resources:** Africa Advocacy Foundation, African Culture Promotions, Community Health Action Trust, Ernest Foundation, Ffena (African Health Policy Network), HIV Health Trainers (Terrence Higgins Trust), First Point (Metro Centre), Positive Care Link, Salem Health Project, Widows and Orphans International.

**Thanks to the MAC AIDS Fund for funding this leaflet.**

This leaflet can be viewed in large format as a PDF.  
Call NAM on 020 3242 0820.

 <p><b>The Information Standard</b></p>	<p>This organisation has been certified as a producer of reliable health and social care information.</p>
	<p>www.theinformationstandard.org</p>

<p><b>Crystal Mark 20054</b></p> 	<p>Clarity approved by Plain English Campaign</p>
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## Notes

To find out where you can get tested in your local area, phone THT Direct on 0808 802 1221.

### 'Rapid' HIV tests provide results in 30 minutes or less.

- If the result is 'HIV negative', you don't have HIV and you don't need any more tests.
- If the result is 'reactive' this means that you need to have another blood test done.
- An 'HIV positive' result cannot be given with a rapid test alone.

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## Want to find out more?

### For more information on this topic:

- read the Terrence Higgins Trust's booklets 'Thinking about having an HIV test' and 'Why should I test?'; or
- read our 'Better off knowing' leaflet; or
- speak to an adviser at THT Direct (phone: 0808 802 1221).

### For more information about HIV

You can get free fact sheets, booklets, email bulletins and a newsletter from our website at [www.aidsmap.com/resources](http://www.aidsmap.com/resources). You can get answers to common questions at [www.aidsmap.com/hiv-basics](http://www.aidsmap.com/hiv-basics) and find local services at [www.aidsmap.com/e-atlas](http://www.aidsmap.com/e-atlas).

**Contact us** by calling 020 3242 0820 or by sending an email to [info@nam.org.uk](mailto:info@nam.org.uk)

### Has this resource been useful to you?

Please let us know what you think by visiting our website at [www.aidsmap.com/feedback](http://www.aidsmap.com/feedback), phoning us or sending an email to [info@nam.org.uk](mailto:info@nam.org.uk). Your feedback helps us to improve the services we offer you.

You can contact us to find out more about the scientific research and information we have used to produce this leaflet.

**We recommend that you discuss the information in this leaflet with a doctor or other health worker.**

# Regular health checks allow you to be sure that you are in good health. A health check can include testing to see if you have HIV.

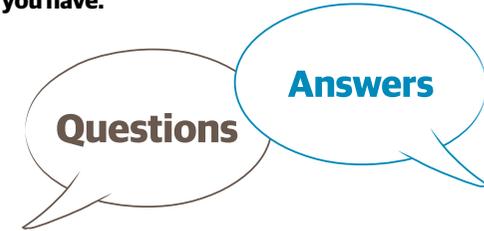
**1** You can be tested for free at an NHS sexual health clinic, a GP surgery, or a community testing project. When you attend a clinic or hospital for any reason, the doctor may offer you a HIV test.



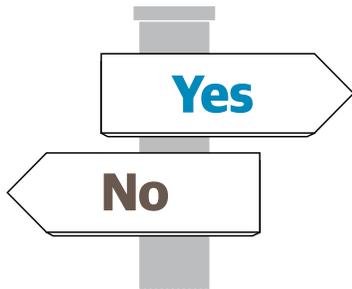
**2** Testing is confidential. It takes place in a private room. If you go to a sexual health clinic or a community testing project, you don't need to give your real name.



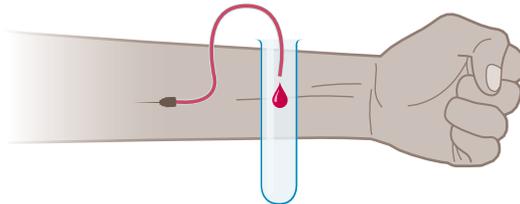
**3** Before you test, a member of staff should tell you what the test involves and answer any questions you have.



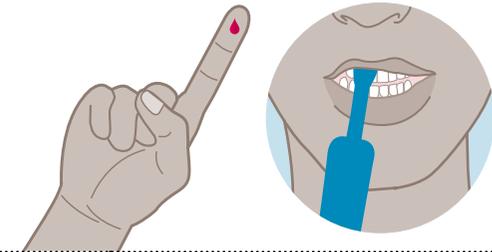
**4** You don't have to take the test - it's your choice.



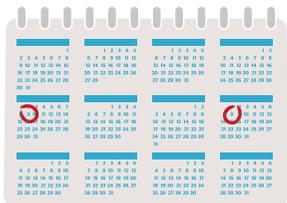
**5** For most HIV tests, blood is taken from your arm. Depending on the clinic, the results will be ready within 48 hours or up to two weeks later.



**6** Some clinics use a different type of test which needs either a drop of blood from your finger or fluid from your mouth. The result will be ready in a few minutes.



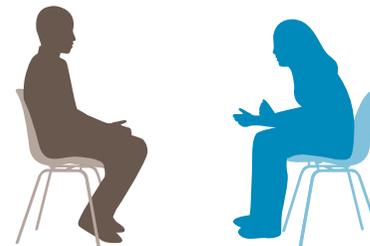
**7** If you have recently taken a risk (for example, had sex without a condom), you may be asked to come back for another test in a few months. This is to be sure the result is accurate.



**8** When all the necessary tests have been done, the result will be 'HIV negative' (you don't have HIV) or 'HIV positive' (you have HIV).

**HIV negative** = You don't have HIV  
**HIV positive** = You have HIV

**9** If the result is positive, you will be put in touch with medical care and support services.



**10** The result is confidential. It will not be given to your family, your employer, the Government or the immigration authorities without your permission.



## Important points

- Testing for HIV is free, voluntary and confidential.

- Depending on which type of test is used, the result will be available within two weeks or within 30 minutes.