



## I am pregnant Will I be tested!

HIV testing is recommended for all pregnant women. HIV testing in Indiana is provided to pregnant women as *opt-out testing*. *Opt-out testing* is automatically included as part of the routine prenatal care. Women must specifically ask **not** to be tested and sign a form refusing HIV testing. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that *opt-out testing* be provided to all pregnant women and is the standard of care of all women in Indiana, which is outlined in the Indiana code.

### **What are the benefits of HIV testing for pregnant women?**

A mother who knows early in her pregnancy that she is HIV infected has more time to make important decisions. She and her health care provider will have more time to decide on effective ways to protect her health and prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV. She can also take steps to prevent passing HIV to her partner.

### **How will I be tested for HIV?**

The recommended screening test for HIV is the combination HIV antibody and HIV antigen test. HIV antibodies are a type of protein the body produces in response to HIV infection. An HIV antibody test looks for HIV antibodies in a person's blood, urine, or fluids from the mouth. When a person has a positive result from an HIV antibody test, a second and different type of antibody test is done to confirm that the person is indeed infected with HIV. The second test is called a confirmatory HIV test. To be diagnosed with HIV, a person's confirmatory HIV test must also be positive.

HIV screening test results are often available within an hour. Getting results from a confirmatory HIV test can take longer—from a few days to a few weeks after the test. People generally receive their results during a follow-up visit with a health care provider. It is important to keep your appointment for your HIV test results.

Pregnant women who test positive for HIV have many options to stay healthy and protect their babies from becoming HIV infected. Health care providers recommend that women infected with HIV take anti-HIV medications to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV and, for their own health.

If you are diagnosed with HIV, your health care provider will answer your questions about HIV and discuss ways to help you and your baby stay healthy. Together you can make decisions about HIV care during your pregnancy.

### **Terms Used in This Fact Sheet**

**HIV antibody test:** an HIV test that checks for HIV antibodies in a person's blood, urine, or fluids from the mouth. When the body is infected with HIV, the immune system (the system of the body that fights off infections) produces HIV antibodies

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**What happens if I ask not to be tested for HIV?**

You will not be tested for HIV if you sign a form refusing HIV testing. However, your health care provider will likely re-emphasize the importance of HIV testing. You may be offered counseling on how HIV is spread and ways to prevent HIV transmission. Throughout your pregnancy, your health care provider encourage you to reconsider your decision not to be tested.

**Where can I find information on HIV testing in my state?**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) offers information on HIV testing for each state. Contact HHS at 1-877-696-6775 or 1-202-619-0257. You can also find information on the Indiana State Health Department website. <http://www.in.gov/isdh/23727.htm>.

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This information is based on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' *Recommendations for Use of Antiretroviral Drugs in Pregnant HIV-1-Infected Women for Maternal Health and Interventions to Reduce Perinatal HIV Transmission in the United States* (available at <http://aidsinfo.nih.gov/guidelines>)