

BP-A491\_HIV POST-TEST COUNSELING (NEGATIVE)

This session is to inform you of your recent HIV test results, review how HIV is transmitted, and discuss how to decrease your chances of becoming infected.

Your recent test for evidence of infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) has been determined to be **negative**. HIV is associated with the disease known as AIDS, and the negative result means there is no evidence of HIV infection or risk of developing AIDS.

Commonly asked questions are listed below:

1) **Even though the test is negative, can I still be positive?**

As mentioned in the pre-test handout, there are *false negatives*. This is generally the case when people have recently been infected due to the fact that it takes some time, up to 6 months, for viral antibodies to be detected.

2) **Does this mean I should be retested?**

This question should be answered for your individual situation by your health care-provider. In general, if you have not been involved in any high-risk behaviors, and this continues to be the case, there is little reason to be concerned with developing a positive test.

3) **What is "high-risk" behavior?**

These are behaviors that can result in transmission of HIV from one person to another. High-risk activities are listed below:

- a) Unsafe sexual activity - Having unprotected sex with a male or female partner who may be infected.
- b) Contact from a work injury - Work-related contact with blood or other contaminated body fluids that were taken into your skin, eyes, nose or mouth.
- c) Receiving a blood transfusion or organ transplant - This risk has been dramatically reduced since accurate screening tests for HIV infection became available in 1985.
- d) Having sex with partners at risk - Having unprotected sexual contact with male or female partners: (1) who are infected or you are uncertain as to whether they are infected, (2) who inject drugs (3) who have received a blood transfusion, organ transplant or artificial insemination from a person with documented HIV infection.
- e) Sharing equipment - Sharing injecting (IV) needles, tattoo equipment, razors or other items contaminated with an infected person's blood. If the equipment has been in contact with another person's blood it can come into contact with the virus which then can be transferred to your body from the equipment.

4) **Can I still become infected?**

Yes, by engaging in any of the "high-risk" behaviors.

5) **Can I spread the infection?**

Since your test is negative, probably not. However, remember there is a time lapse between infection and the time when your test turns positive. This was discussed under the first question. Anyone with a *false negative* could still spread the infection.

6) **How long does it take for a person's test to turn positive once infected?**

This usually occurs in three months after an exposure to the HIV, but can take up to six months.

7) **How can I protect myself from becoming infected?**

During incarceration:

Abstain from sexual activity with other inmates, do not inject drugs, share razors or toothbrushes with other inmates, or get a tattoo, and avoid all other high risk behaviors. If you have a history of using illegal drugs or have a problem with alcohol abuse, seek advice on drug treatment programs available during incarceration and upon release from health care staff, social workers, psychology staff, or drug counselors.

Upon release:

Abstain from sexual activity or have sexual intercourse with only *one* partner and know whether he or she is infected or not. Talk honestly with your sexual partner and if they do not know if they are infected, encourage them to get tested. If you do choose to engage in sexual activity, the best current method of prevention is to use a condom or "rubber" to prevent contact with your partner's body fluids. This is not absolute protection, since condoms can tear. You should seek further advice and HIV education on more specific methods of preventing infection from your health care provider or from community AIDS prevention organizations upon release.

Abstain from injecting drugs, which is strongly associated with many health risks including infection with the hepatitis B virus, hepatitis C virus, and HIV. Many local health departments and community AIDS prevention organizations can refer you to drug treatment programs and other support services in the community.

If you do continue to engage in injection drug use, you should use clean needles whenever possible, and never share your needles or other injection drug use equipment with others. You may reduce your chances of infection by rinsing the "works" with a bleach solution but this is not always effective or safe. You should contact a health care provider knowledgeable in this area to get specific instructions.

If you have any future questions, discuss them with your health care provider.

Inmate Name	Register #	Date
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(Signature and Retention in Medical Record)

Replaces BP-S491.061 of OCT 1995