

# HIV Testing

## Test Today. Don't Delay.

It is important for everyone to know their HIV status. Getting an HIV test is the first step for people living with HIV to get care and treatment and control the infection.\* Taking HIV medicine as prescribed helps people living with HIV to live a long, healthy life and protect their sex partners from HIV. About 85% of people with HIV in the US know they have the virus. However, 15% (162,500) of people with HIV don't know they have the virus, and about 40% of new HIV infections come from them. Half of people with HIV have had the virus 3 years or more before diagnosis. Most people at high risk who didn't get tested last year saw a healthcare provider during the year. Everyone should get tested at least once, and people at high risk should be tested at least once a year. Healthcare providers can diagnose HIV sooner if they test more people and test people at high risk more often.

### Healthcare providers can:

- Routinely provide HIV testing to all people aged 13 to 64, according to CDC guidelines. [bit.ly/2eJ8YNz](http://bit.ly/2eJ8YNz)
- Screen all teens and adults for HIV risk, and test people at high risk at least once a year. This includes some gay and bisexual men who may benefit from more frequent testing (for example, every 3 to 6 months).
- Start people on HIV treatment as quickly as possible after diagnosis.
- Discuss prevention tools with patients. Provide or refer to prevention services, including pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and services for people who inject drugs. [www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk)

\* Take HIV medicine as prescribed so the amount of HIV in the body gets and stays extremely low (less than 200 copies per milliliter of blood or undetectable level).

**Want to learn more?** [www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/hiv-testing](http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/hiv-testing)



**Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention**  
National Center for HIV/AIDS,  
Viral Hepatitis, STD, and  
TB Prevention

## 1 in 2

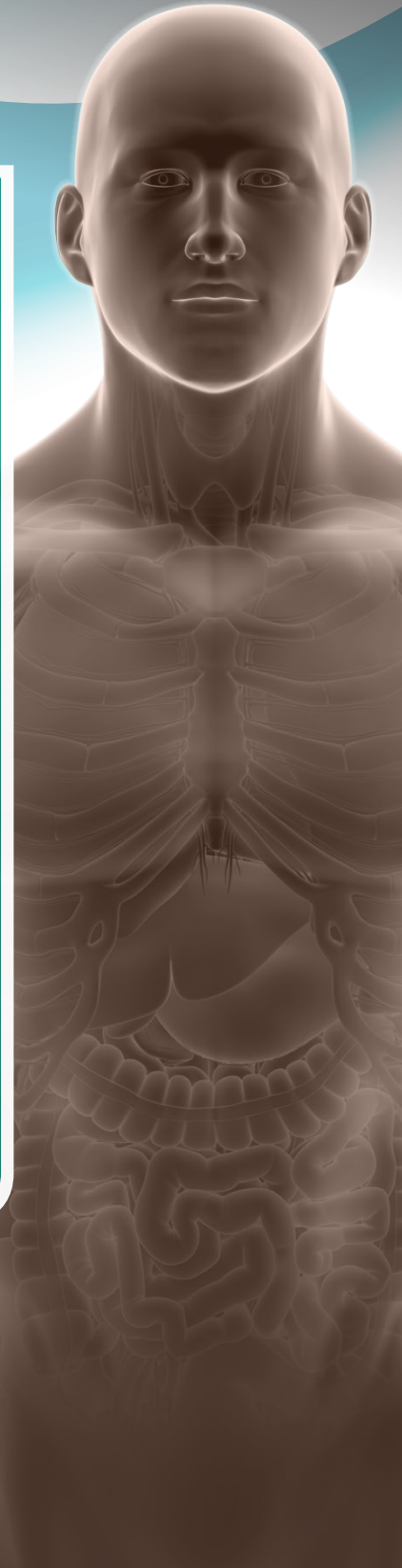
**1 in 2 people with  
HIV have had the  
virus at least 3 years  
before diagnosis.**

## 40%

**About 40% of new  
HIV infections come  
from people who  
don't know they  
have HIV.**

## 7 in 10

**7 in 10 people at  
high risk for HIV  
who weren't tested  
last year saw a  
healthcare provider  
during that year.**



# Problem:

Many people have HIV for years before they know it.



In 2015, **nearly 40,000** people in the US received an HIV diagnosis

.....  
**1 in 2** had been living with HIV 3 years or more

.....  
**1 in 4** had been living with HIV 7 years or more

.....  
**1 in 5** already had the most advanced stage of HIV (AIDS)

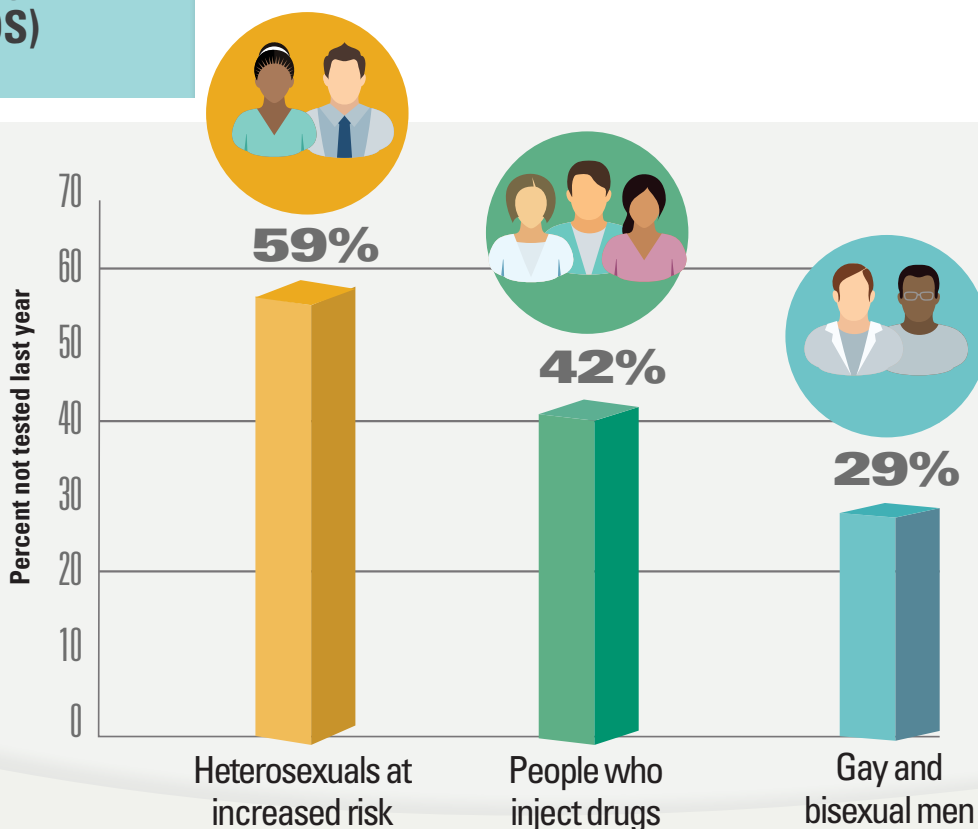
**Half** of heterosexual men with **HIV** got a diagnosis **5 years** or more after they got the virus—later than any other group.



## MISSED Opportunities

**7 in 10** people at high risk who weren't tested for HIV in the past year saw a healthcare provider during that time.

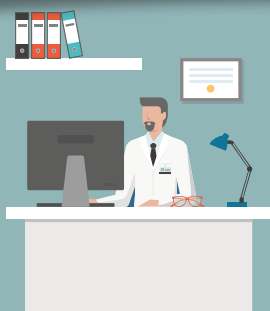
More than **75%** of them weren't offered a test.



**Many people at high risk\* for HIV aren't getting tested every year**

\*People at high risk for HIV include: 1) sexually active gay and bisexual men, 2) people who inject drugs, and 3) heterosexuals who have sex with someone who is at risk for or has HIV.

# HIV Testing: Gateway to Lifesaving Treatment and Prevention



## Healthcare Providers

### Before Testing



- ▲ Talk to all your patients about HIV. Tell them HIV testing is a routine part of a patient's healthcare.
- ▲ Have the conversation about HIV risk. Don't assume you know a patient's risk. [bit.ly/2yvLKoe](https://bit.ly/2yvLKoe)

### Giving the Test



- ▲ Make HIV testing routine for everyone aged 13 to 64. **Know your patients' status!** [hivscreening.amjmed.com](https://hivscreening.amjmed.com)
- ▲ Test patients at high risk at least once a year. Consider the potential benefits of more frequent testing (for example, every 3 to 6 months) for sexually active gay and bisexual men.
- ▲ Test women as soon as possible if they are pregnant or planning to get pregnant. If they are at high risk, test them again in the third trimester.

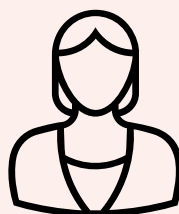
### After the Test



- ▲ If people have HIV, link them to treatment quickly and talk about how to prevent transmission. The sooner people start HIV treatment, the more they benefit.
- ▲ Encourage patients with HIV to stay in care to reduce the virus in their body to very low or undetectable levels.
- ▲ Help all patients understand their risk and the best prevention options. [bit.ly/2xWHYoM](https://bit.ly/2xWHYoM)

## Patients

### Before Testing



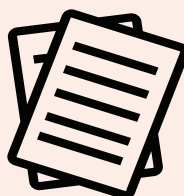
- ▲ Know why HIV testing is important for everyone.
- ▲ Your provider may ask you personal questions that are important for both of you to understand your HIV risk. Be as open and honest as you can.

### Taking the Test



- ▲ Ask your healthcare provider to test you for HIV. **Know your status!**
- ▲ Ask your provider how often you should get retested.
- ▲ If you aren't tested by your provider, find a testing site by:
  - Visiting [gettested.cdc.gov](https://gettested.cdc.gov),
  - Texting your ZIP code to KNOW-IT (566948), or
  - Calling 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636).
- ▲ You can also get a home testing kit (the Home Access HIV-1 Test System or the OraQuick HIV Test) online or from a drugstore.

### After the Test



- ▲ Find out your results.
- ▲ If you have HIV, start treatment quickly to get the most benefit. Stay in care and take medicine as prescribed to be healthy and protect your sex partners from HIV.
- ▲ If you don't have HIV, ask your provider or use the HIV Risk Reduction Tool to learn the best ways to prevent it. [www.cdc.gov/hivrisk](https://www.cdc.gov/hivrisk)

# What Can Be Done?



## The Federal government is

- Funding HIV testing at health departments, clinics, and community-based organizations.
- Providing testing guidelines. [bit.ly/2y12Hex](https://bit.ly/2y12Hex)
- Conducting education, providing prevention services, and informing providers about HIV testing and prevention.
- Conducting research to improve HIV tests, detect HIV earlier, and improve HIV testing efforts.
- Measuring progress toward a future free of HIV in the US.

## Healthcare providers can

- Routinely provide HIV testing to all people aged 13 to 64, according to CDC guidelines. [bit.ly/2eJ8YNz](https://bit.ly/2eJ8YNz)
- Screen all teens and adults for HIV risk, and test people at high risk at least once a year. This includes some gay and bisexual men who may benefit from more frequent testing (for example, every 3 to 6 months).
- Start people on HIV treatment as quickly as possible after diagnosis.
- Discuss prevention tools with patients. Provide or refer to prevention services, including pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and services for people who inject drugs. [www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk)

## Health departments and community-based organizations can

- Test people for HIV.
- Provide or refer to HIV prevention services, including PrEP and services for people who inject drugs.
- Link people who test positive to HIV medical care quickly.
- Reduce stigma and help communities understand the benefits of HIV testing, early diagnosis, and treatment.

## Everyone can

- Know their HIV status. See a healthcare provider, find a testing site by visiting [gettested.cdc.gov](https://gettested.cdc.gov) or texting your ZIP code to KNOW-IT (566948), or use a home test.
- Get tested at least once a year if they are at high risk for HIV.
- Get tested as soon as possible if they are pregnant or planning to get pregnant.
- Learn how to prevent HIV and protect themselves and their partners. [www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk)

1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)  
TTY: 1-888-232-6348  
[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

**Accessible version – [www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/hiv-testing](http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/hiv-testing)**

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

1600 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30329

Publication date: 11/28/2017