

HIV Testing at UHS

CONFIDENTIAL VS. ANONYMOUS TESTING

Confidential Testing: Confidential testing means that information about your visits and your test is not released to anyone without your express written permission except as required by law. Information about your visit and your test results is recorded in your medical chart. UHS offers confidential testing for HIV Antibody Testing.

Anonymous Testing: With anonymous testing, no record is kept of your name or your test results. A trained counselor sees you, but no medical personnel are available to examine you. If you are infected, further referrals for medical care will be made. Anonymous testing is available free of charge through the NYS Health Department.

HIV TESTING AT UHS

UHS offers confidential HIV testing. Testing at UHS is by appointment at the UHS Medical Center Office, the UHS River Campus Office, and the UHS Eastman School Office. To assure patient confidentiality, each page in the medical chart pertaining to HIV testing is clearly marked by a sticker which alerts UHS staff that this information is confidential and cannot be released without your specific written permission.

To schedule an appointment at UHS, call 275-2662. If you prefer to speak with a UHS nurse directly, you can call the UHS Health Information Line (275-1160). It is preferable to specifically request an appointment for HIV testing; however, if this is difficult for you, you can tell the receptionist that your concern is personal or that you need a "serum antibody test." You will be scheduled to see your primary care provider at UHS. If there is concern about occupational exposure, please tell the receptionist, so your appointment can be scheduled with the Occupational Health Nurse.

PRE- AND POST-TEST COUNSELING

Every patient who comes to UHS for HIV testing will receive pre-test counseling that includes an assessment of risk factors, information about reducing the risk of exposure in the future, and discussion of the meaning of the test results. You will be asked to sign a consent form indicating that you understand what is involved with testing.

At UHS, all patients who have an HIV test are asked to schedule a return appointment to discuss the test results, whether the results are positive or negative. If your results are positive, appropriate medical care can be arranged at the University Health Service, with involvement of other services as indicated. In addition, you will be asked to notify your sexual partner(s) and refer them for counseling and testing.

PAYMENT

HIV tests are processed through a private laboratory. The fee for the test is usually under \$25. The fee is dependent on the fee charged by the laboratory and is subject to change without prior notice should the fees charged by the laboratory increase. This fee may or may not be covered by your insurance plan. You may want to check with your insurance company. Confidential billing arrangements (e.g. paying the bill yourself instead of sending it to your insurance company) can be made if you prefer not to submit the bill to your insurance company.

There is also a UHS visit fee charged for HIV testing. For full-time students, the mandatory health fee covers the cost of the visit fee. For employees coming to UHS due to a work-related exposure, the University's Occupational Health Program or Worker's Compensation may cover the cost of the visit. Other patients may want to speak with their UHS primary care provider if they have questions about the cost of the visit or the laboratory fee.

WHO SHOULD BE TESTED

People should be tested for HIV if they have any symptoms of the disease or if they have any risk factors for acquiring the infection. In order for the test results to be valid, you are advised to wait six months after you think you might have been exposed.

The symptoms of infection may include:

- Swollen glands that may or may not be painful.
- Unexpected/unplanned weight loss of over 10 lbs. in a few months.
- Recurring fevers, chills, or night sweats.
- Cough lasting longer than 2 weeks.
- Diarrhea lasting longer than 2 weeks.
- Persistent fatigue.
- Pink or purple bumps or blotches on the skin.
- Easy bruising or unexplained bleeding from any part of the body.

You have risk factors for HIV if you:

- Have had any sexually transmitted disease.
- Have shared needles.
- Are a man who has had sex with another man.
- Have had sex with a male or female prostitute.
- Had sexual relations with any of the above.
- Have engaged in unprotected sexual intercourse.
- Are a woman who has been engaging in the above risky behaviors and you plan to have a baby or are not using birth control.
- Are a hemophiliac who has received multiple transfusions.
- Received a blood transfusion from 1978-1985.
- Have had a work-related exposure to infectious body fluids.

IF YOUR RESULTS ARE POSITIVE

Consult a medical provider experienced in treating HIV/AIDS. Discuss the use of anti-viral therapies to slow the progress of the infection.

- Protect your sex partner(s) from HIV by abstaining from sex or by practicing safer sex.
- Inform past and current sex partner(s) so that they can get tested.
- Do not share needles or works (injection equipment)
- Get psychological support with a therapist and/or join a support group for people with HIV.
- Get information and social and legal support from AIDS service organizations.
- Maintain a strong immune system with a healthy lifestyle and regular medical exams.
- Always inform medical providers so that you can receive appropriate care.

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OTHER LOCAL TESTING SITES

Sites Offering Confidential Testing:

- *Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Clinic of the Monroe County Health Department, 464-5928*: Offers confidential, free testing on a walk-in basis. You will be seen by a trained counselor before and after the HIV test. If you are infected, referrals for medical care will be made.
- *Planned Parenthood of Rochester and Genesee Valley, 546-2595*: Offers confidential testing on an appointment basis only. There is a charge for the visit; no charge for clinic patients who are tested as part of their yearly physical.
- *AIDS Community Health Center (ACHC), 244-9000*: Offers confidential testing on an appointment basis only. There is a fee.
- *Infectious Disease Clinic of Strong Memorial Hospital, 275-0526*: Offers confidential testing by appointment only. There is a fee.
- *A private doctor's office or hospital clinic*: Before being tested, you should receive counseling and information about how the test results will be handled in your medical chart.

Anonymous Testing:

- *New York State Department of Health -HIV Hotline, 423-8081 or (800) 962-5063 for out-of-area. Voice/TDD 423-8120*: Offers anonymous, free testing on an appointment or walk-in basis.

Local Support Services:

AIDS Rochester, Inc., 442-2220: 1350 University Avenue, Suite C, Rochester, New York 14607-1622. Services include confidential testing, support groups, case management, referrals, and programs on HIV information, prevention, and risk reduction.

SCHEDULING AN APPOINTMENT AT UHS

The University Health Service (UHS) offers a full range of health care services for men and women. You can schedule an appointment with your primary care provider (PCP) by calling 275-2662. Women can also schedule an appointment with one of the women's health nurse practitioners. All visits to UHS are confidential.

AVAILABLE ON THE UHS WEB SITE

(In Health Topics)

- HIV & AIDS
- Talking With Your Partner About STIs

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

University Health Service (UHS) 275-2662

UHS Health Information Line 275-1160

NYS Health Department 423-8081

AIDS Rochester Information Line 442-2200

NYS HIV/AIDS Information Service 1-800-541-AIDS

NYS Counseling HIV Hotline 1-800-872-2777

CDC-INFO: 1-800-CDC-INFO or 1-888-232-6348 (TTY)