

## Information on Negative HIV Test Results

You have received a negative HIV test result today. This almost always means you are not infected with HIV.

### Can you be infected with HIV even though the result was negative?

There is a period between the time of infection and the time that an HIV test can detect HIV infection. If you have engaged in risk behaviors for HIV during the month prior to your test, you should speak to your provider about your need to be re-tested for HIV.

### What actions put you at risk for becoming infected with HIV and/or STDs?

- Engaging in anal, vaginal or oral sex without a condom or dental dam
- Sharing unclean drug paraphernalia like syringes and cookers, or sharing unclean needles used for tattoos and body piercing
- The use of drugs and/or alcohol can also put you at risk by making it harder for you to practice safe behavior

### If you are planning to have a baby, or are pregnant:

Even if you are negative today, testing and retesting of both the mother and the father may be indicated based on risk factors for HIV. It is important to know your HIV status because HIV can be passed to your baby during pregnancy, delivery or through breastfeeding.

### A negative test result provides opportunities to protect yourself from getting HIV:

- **Abstain** - Not having sex or sharing needles, syringes or other drug injection equipment with a person who has HIV or whose HIV status you don't know is a sure way to protect yourself from HIV.
- **Use a latex male condom or a female condom.** Condoms work very well to prevent HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases if you use them the right way, every time you have sex.
- **PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis)** is a daily pill that can prevent HIV infection. If you are at risk for HIV, taking PrEP as prescribed can greatly reduce your risk of HIV. Ask your provider if PrEP may be right for you.
- **PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis)** is an **emergency** medication that you begin taking **within 3 days** of being exposed to HIV.
  - If you are HIV-negative and think you were exposed to HIV through contact with someone who has or might have HIV, go **immediately** to an emergency room and ask for PEP.
- **Be sober** – Using drugs or alcohol causes changes in awareness, attitude, consciousness and behavior and can lower your ability to make decisions about safer sex and using clean needles and works.
- **If you use needles or syringes:**
  - Use new needles and equipment each time and don't share anything, including cotton or water.
  - Do not share needles for ear piercing, body piercing or tattooing.
  - NEVER buy needles on the street, even if they look new.
  - **Expanded Syringe Access Programs** provide needles and syringes at pharmacies and other locations:  
[www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/consumers/prevention/needles\\_syringes/esap/provdirect.htm](http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/consumers/prevention/needles_syringes/esap/provdirect.htm)
  - **Syringe Exchange Programs** provide needles and syringes free of charge:  
[www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/consumers/prevention/needles\\_syringes/docs/sep\\_hours\\_sites.pdf](http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/consumers/prevention/needles_syringes/docs/sep_hours_sites.pdf)