

**ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT
HIV/AIDS?
YOU ARE NOT ALONE**

Many survivors of sexual assault have questions and concerns about HIV/AIDS after an assault. This brochure provides basic information about the likelihood of infection, options for reducing risk of infection, issues of testing, and identification of community resources.

Overall, it is unlikely that the sexual assault perpetrator will have HIV/AIDS. However, because individual situations and risks vary, the fear of being infected with HIV is often a concern and may come up at different times for survivors:

- You may want information about the potential risk of getting HIV immediately after the assault or months later.
- You may wonder if your current HIV status is the result of an assault that happened years ago.
- You may have known that you had HIV prior to the assault and want to discuss the potential impact on your current health.

Regardless of age, sexual orientation, or gender identity, these issues may be of concern to you. Whatever your situation, you are not alone.

At your local rape crisis center, you can meet and talk with people who can help:

- Other survivors who share your concerns
- Counselors who can offer support and referrals to HIV counseling and testing services.

All rape crisis center services are free and confidential. A listing of rape crisis centers and HIV counseling and testing services is listed on the back on this brochure.

Common Questions & Answers

Q: I was sexually assaulted, should I be afraid of getting HIV?

A: Although many people are scared about getting HIV after an assault, research shows that the risk from sexual assault is low. Getting tested may be one way to help address your fear. Knowing your HIV status can help you take control of your health.

Talking to an HIV counselor or qualified health care professional can help you define your level of risk of getting HIV, as well as help you explore and understand the options for reducing your risk.

Q: Should I get tested for HIV? How soon after the sexual assault should I get tested?

A: You have options. You may decide to have “baseline” HIV testing immediately after the assault to find out what your HIV status was prior to the assault. If you choose to have a baseline test, it is recommended within one week of the assault.

Since it can take up to six weeks after the assault for HIV antibodies to develop and be detected by the test, it is recommended that survivors of sexual assault get tested for HIV antibodies at 6 weeks after the assault to find out if HIV is present. This test is recommended whether or not you choose baseline testing.

Q: Where can I get support, guidance and testing services?

A: There are 24-hour rape crisis hotlines, counseling and advocacy services available in your area, providing an opportunity for you to discuss your concerns and options with trained rape crisis counselors. Services are free, confidential and available in English and multiple languages based on survivor needs and interpreter availability. A list of rape crisis services is on the back of this brochure.

As your situation is unique, you may consider discussing your concerns with a knowledgeable HIV/AIDS counselor. These counselors can assist you in assessing your risks for getting HIV, explain the testing process and the meaning of the test result, and deliver your test result in person.

Q: Do I have testing options? Where can I be tested for HIV?

A: You have options. You may go to your doctor or health care provider and get tested. You can also visit one of the HIV testing programs across Massachusetts. To find a test site near you, call **800-235-2331** or visit www.mass.gov/dph/aids. In

addition, if you go to the hospital for urgent medical care, you may also be offered an HIV test. Finally, some test sites offer tests where they give you a number instead of using your name. All of these options can be discussed with a rape crisis counselor to help you find out which option may be best for you.

Q: Can I reduce my risk of getting HIV after being sexually assaulted?

A: Yes. There may be treatment medications available to you. If started as soon as possible after exposure to HIV (recommended within 72 hours), these medications may reduce the risk of developing HIV. This is known as post-exposure prophylaxis or PEP. It is important to get accurate information from a qualified health care provider about your HIV risk as well as the possible benefits and side effects of beginning this medication. More information is available from the resources listed on the back of this brochure.

Statewide Resources

Llamanos
Statewide Spanish Language Sexual Assault
Helpline
Toll-Free: (800) 223-5001

SafeLink
Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline
Toll-Free: (877) 785-2020 / TTY: (877) 521-2601

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

MDPH HIV/AIDS Bureau
(617) 624-5300
www.state.ma.us/dph/aids

Massachusetts Rape Crisis Programs & Hotlines

Western Region
YWCA of Western Massachusetts
Springfield: (800) 796-8711 / TTY: (413) 733-7100

The Elizabeth Freeman Center
Pittsfield: (866) 401-2425 / TTY: (413) 499-2425

Center for Women and Community
Amherst: (413) 545-0800 / TTY: (413) 577-0940

NELCWIT
Greenfield: (413) 772-0806; (888) 249-0806
TTY: (413) 772-0806

Central Region
Pathways for Change
Worcester: (800) 870-5905 / TTY: (888) 887-7130

Voices Against Violence/SMOC
Framingham: (800) 593-1125 / TTY: (800) 593-1125

Wayside Valley Rape Crisis Program
Milford: (800) 511-5070 / TTY: (800) 478-4205

Southeast Region
A Safe Place
Nantucket: (508) 228-2111 / TTY: (508) 228-7095

The Women's Center
New Bedford: (888) 839-6636 / TTY: (508) 996-1177

Independence House, Inc.
Hyannis: (800) 439-6507 / TTY: (508) 771-6782

New Hope, Inc.
Attleboro: (800) 323-4673 / TTY: (800) 323-4673

A New Day
Brockton: (508) 588-8255 / TTY: (508) 894-2869

CONNECT to End Violence
Vineyard Haven: (508) 696-7233 / TTY: (508) 684-8176

Greater Boston Region
Boston Area Rape Crisis Center
Cambridge: (800) 841-8371
TTY: (617) 492-6434

Northeast Region
Center for Hope and Healing, an agency of RCSGL
Lowell: (800) 542-5212 / TTY: (978) 452-8723

YWCA of Greater Lawrence
Lawrence: (877) 509-9922 / TTY: (978) 686-8840

YWCA North Shore Rape Crisis Center
Lynn: (800) 922-8772 / TTY: (781) 477-2315

HIV/AIDS & Hepatitis Hotlines and Information

To find an HIV test site near you, call 800-235-2331 or visit www.mass.gov/dph/aids

Massachusetts HIV/AIDS Hotline
(800) 235-2331 TTY: 617-437-1672
www.aac.org/

Massachusetts Hepatitis C Information
<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/id/epidemiology/hepatitis/hepatitis-c/>

AIDS Treatment Information Service
(800) 448-0440 TTD: (800) 243-7012
English, Spanish
www.aidsinfo.nih.gov

CDC National Health Hotline
(HIV, Hepatitis, STD, Other Health Questions)
(800)232-4636 TTY: 888-232-6348
English, Spanish only
www.cdc.gov/hiv

Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)

**Centers for Disease Control National Clinicians
PEPline** (888) 448-4911

The Center for Violence Prevention and Recovery
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
(617) 667-8141
<http://www.bidmc.org/violenceprevention>

MA Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program
S.A.N.E. sites offer Post-Exposure Prophylaxis when medically appropriate. Find designated S.A.N.E. sites at: <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/community-health/dvip/violence/sane/>

MA Department of Public Health PEP Information
<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/id/hiv-aids/>

Emergency Contraception Information

Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts
www.pplm.org, (800) 258-4448

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Sexual Assault & HIV/AIDS

Information Options Support Services



www.janedoe.org
(617) 248-0922, TTY: (617) 263-2200