

Are you worried about HIV? You are not alone.

Many people are worried about HIV after an assault. This brochure has basic info, testing, and community resources for anyone who may want to know more about HIV after a sexual assault.

HIV Basic Information

What Is HIV?

HIV stands for "Human Immunodeficiency Virus," which is a virus that attacks the immune system by destroying CD4+ cells – a type of white blood cell. This makes it difficult for the body to fight infection and stay healthy.

AIDS stands for "Acquired Immune Deficiency" Syndrome, which is a diagnosis that can be caused by leaving HIV untreated for about a 7-10 year period.

How is HIV Passed from Person to Person?

Only certain body fluids—blood, semen (cum), pre-seminal fluid (pre-cum), fluid from an anus, fluid from a vagina, and breast milk—from a person who has HIV can pass HIV. These fluids must come in contact with the other person's mouth, vagina, penis, or anus, or enter a person's bloodstream (ex: cuts or sharing needles). You cannot get HIV from sharing toilets, food, or drinks, saliva, sweat, tears, closed-mouth kissing, insects or pets (CDC, *HIV Transmission*).

Is HIV treatable?

HIV is not curable, but it is treatable. If the medication is started early and taken as prescribed, people living with HIV can live just as long as folks living without HIV.

HIV Testing

After a sexual assault, it is usually recommended that people are tested as soon as possible for an initial HIV test. Not all healthcare professionals will automatically schedule a test for HIV after a sexual assault, so you may need to ask to be tested. In addition to testing, a care provider may recommend a medication to prevent HIV transmission called Post-Exposure Prophylaxis or PEP treatment. Everyone person's situation is unique, so testing and follow-up plans are decided on an individual basis.

Confidential Testing in Massachusetts:

In Massachusetts, most testing sites offer confidential testing. Confidential testing sites record the names and addresses of those who are being tested. The results are documented in the person's medical records. Even if the test is negative, the medical file will still state that an HIV test was performed. No one can give out patient results without permission, unless required by law.

HIV Testing Costs

The cost of HIV tests are different for each HIV testing site. You can learn more about their costs by calling, visiting, or searching their websites. You may also qualify for support from your state's Crime Victim Compensation Program to help with the costs of tests and treatment. Visit for more info:

<http://www.mass.gov/ago/docs/victim/victim-comp-app.pdf>

Find an HIV Testing Site Near You:

- call 1-800-232-4636, TTY: 888-232-6348
- visit gettested.cdc.gov
- text your ZIP code to KNOW IT (566948)

HIV Information and Resources

Websites with Info about HIV

- Info about HIV and its treatment | thebody.com
- Info for Women Living with HIV | thewellproject.org
- Info about HIV and prevention | projectinform.org
- CDC Info about HIV | cdc.gov/hiv

HIV Services in Massachusetts

Testing, PrEP, PEP, Syringe Service Program, Healthcare, etc.

www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/aids/resources-guide.pdf

HIV Infolines

- AIDSinfo Helpline: Confidential answers to your questions about HIV/AIDS | 1-800-448-0440, Monday - Friday, 1pm-4pm (EST) (English, Spanish)
- AIDS/HIV Nightline: Confidential support for people living with HIV | 1-800-628-9240, 24/7

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: I was sexually assaulted, should I get tested for HIV?

Many survivors are often scared about getting HIV after a sexual assault. It is recommended to get tested for HIV as soon as possible because it can help you and your health provider understand the immediate risks and potential treatment options. (Center for Disease Control, Risk for Acquiring HIV Infection 2015).

Q: Are there ways to prevent HIV transmission after a sexual assault?

If the sexual assault occurred in the last 72 hours, there is a medicine called post-exposure prophylaxis or PEP that may be recommended by a provider. HIV testing methods and time frames can be different for everyone, a healthcare provider or HIV counselor can help you figure out your options. If you need assistance paying for PEP, you can access and find providers at this link <http://crine.org/npep>.

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

You can discuss your concerns and options with trained rape crisis counselors. You can reach these free and confidential services 24/7. These services are available in English and other languages. Another option is to speak to trained HIV counselors. They can help you figure out your risk, explain how testing works, and deliver your test result in person.

What to Expect

This brochure includes the following:

- HIV Basic Information
- Recommended Testing Information
- HIV Resources
- Common Questions and Answers

Please feel free to reach out to us with any questions and further referrals. We hope that the information within this brochure can provide support as you make choices about your health and wellbeing.

Statewide Sexual Assault & Gender-Based Violence Services

Jane Doe Inc. Search Programs Directory

Use our online directory to find your nearest Rape Crisis Center for free and confidential information, referrals, and support.
www.janedoe.org/find_help/search

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



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Sexual Assault & HIV

OPTIONS | INFO | SUPPORT



The Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

www.janedoe.org

(617) 248-0922, TTY: (617) 263-2200