

Testing and Results

- The rapid HIV test in the ED is free.
- The HIV test will be done with a swab in the mouth. It does not hurt.
- The test takes 20 minutes to run, so your teen will have the test results before you leave the ED today.
- Your teenager's decision to be tested and the results will be confidential, meaning they will be given to the teen privately and not shared with anyone else (including parents) unless the teen says it is okay.

If the test is positive,

- We will confirm the diagnosis with a blood test.
- We will help your teen tell whomever they want to about the diagnosis and start to educate him or her about HIV.
- We will also get your teen referred to treatment while you are still in the ED.
- We have to report positive test results to the Health Department. This ensures you get the help you need.
- If you/your teen decides not to be tested today, you can get free confidential testing at:

Project ARK

4169 Laclede Avenue (in the Central West End)
Monday-Friday from 11 am to 4 pm
314.535.7275

If the test is negative, do I need another test?

- If within the last 3 months you/your teen have had unprotected sex or shared needles, we recommend retesting in 3 to 6 months. This is suggested to make sure a very early infection is not missed.
- The test for HIV looks at the body's response to the virus. Because the body takes time to make that response, it may not show up in the early infection stage.



St. Louis Children's Hospital
One Children's Place
St. Louis, Missouri 63110

314.454.6000

stlouischildrens.org



HIV Screening
for Adolescents

Children's
HOSPITAL • ST. LOUIS
BIC HealthCare

stlouischildrens.org



Dear Teenager and Parent,

St. Louis Children's Hospital is now offering *confidential human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) testing* to all teenagers who come for care to our emergency department. *There will be a brief period of time that the parent will be asked to step out so that this confidential discussion with the nurse or doctor can take place.*

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), a national group that focuses on maintaining the health of all people in the U.S, now recommends that all people ages 13 to 64 years old be tested for HIV regularly. The decision to be tested is your teenager's decision. All teenagers 15 and older seen in the Children's Hospital emergency department will have an opportunity for a private discussion of testing and any other concerns with a care provider.

What is HIV?

HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. This virus attacks the immune system which makes it hard for your body to fight off infection. The HIV virus is the virus that causes AIDS. Unfortunately, there is no cure for HIV. However, there are medicines that can keep people with HIV living healthy lives.

How do you get HIV?

People can get HIV from...

- Having unprotected sexual intercourse or oral sex
- Sharing needles for drugs or tattoos.
- Blood transfusions (but this is very rare)
- HIV is not transmitted by coughing, sneezing, touching, kissing, holding hands, hugging or any common everyday activities.

How can you tell someone has HIV?

You can't tell if someone has HIV by looking at them. Most people with HIV look and feel healthy. People with HIV may not know they have it. The only way to be sure a person doesn't have HIV is to be tested.

Why test teenagers?

- Teenagers have the highest rates of sexually transmitted diseases.
- If the HIV infection is diagnosed late, the virus has time to destroy the immune system and make the person very sick.
- The medicines to treat HIV also don't work as well when a person is treated late in the infection.
- It is important to identify teenagers and young adults with HIV early, so, we can offer them the most benefit from treatment.
- Testing also keeps people from unknowingly giving HIV to others.

