



Get Tested for HIV

HIV and AIDS cannot be cured. However, with the drugs you can get today, it is likely to have a normal lifespan. You can live with little or minimal breaks in quality of life. There are ways to help people stay healthy and live longer.

What is HIV?

HIV is a virus that attacks the immune system. It makes it hard for the body to fight infection and disease.

HIV causes flu-like signs soon after a person is infected. These early signs go away in a few weeks. After that, signs of illness may not appear for many years. But as the virus grows in the body, signs come back and stay. Fatigue, weight loss, fever, night sweats, diarrhea are common signs.

If HIV is not treated and grows to AIDS, signs get worse and the body is less able to fight infections.

What is the test for HIV?

Most doctors use two blood tests, the ELISA and the Western Blot. If the ELISA is positive, the blood is tested again. If the second test is positive, the Western blot is done. If HIV is not found, you may need to be tested again. It can take as little as two weeks or as long as six months for HIV to be found in your blood.

You can get HIV testing in most doctors' offices, public health clinics, hospitals and Planned Parenthood clinics.

You can also buy a home HIV test kit in a drugstore. Choose a test that has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). If a home test is positive, you will need to see a doctor.

Who should have an HIV test?

Experts don't fully agree on who should be tested for HIV. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that all people should get tested as part of their medical care. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends all adults and adolescents who have high risk for HIV be tested.

High-risk behaviors

- Have more than one sex partner and do not use condoms.
- Have a sex partner who shares needles, cookers or other equipment to inject drugs.
- Inject drugs or steroids and share needles, cookers or other equipment.
- Have or recently had an infection, such as syphilis or genital herpes.

What are the benefits of getting tested?

- You can start treatment right away.
- You can stop spreading the infection.
- You can tell your sex partner(s).
- If you are pregnant, you can reduce the risk of passing HIV to your baby.

To get more information about Magellan Complete Care please call us toll-free at 800-327-8613 or 800-424-1694 (TTY only). Or you can call Florida Medicaid Choice Counselors at 877-711-3662 or 866-467-4970 (TTY only).

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention