What if I have more questions?

- Feel free to ask the health professional who gave you this booklet any questions that you might have.
- Call the Michigan statewide HIV/AIDS information hotline (English 1-800-872-AIDS; Español 1-800-862-SIDA; TDD 1-800-332-0849).
- Visit the CDC’s HIV/AIDS website for more information (http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/).

### What You Need To Know

#### About HIV Testing

**What is HIV and how is it spread?**

HIV infection is a long-term illness that damages the body’s immune system, or its ability to fight off diseases. HIV spreads through blood, semen, vaginal fluids, and breast milk. You can get or give HIV infection by:

- Having vaginal, anal, or oral sex without a condom.
- Sharing needles or works when injecting drugs.
- HIV can be passed from mother to child during pregnancy, birth or breastfeeding.
- You **cannot** get HIV by donating blood or through casual contact such as hugging or shaking hands.

**What is AIDS?**

- AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) is the stage of HIV infection when the body is weakened and less able to fight off germs.

**What is an HIV test?**

It is a simple test, done by taking blood or fluid from cells in the mouth, that shows if you have been infected with HIV (human immunodeficiency virus), the virus that causes AIDS.

**Who should have an HIV test?**

- The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) recommends that everyone between the ages of 13 and 64 get tested for HIV.

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175,000 printed at 9.0 cents each with a total cost of $15,191.10

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**Visit the CDC’s HIV/AIDS website for more information (http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/).**
In Michigan, you have the right to request an anonymous HIV test.

**What is the difference between anonymous and confidential testing?**

- **Anonymous HIV testing** means your name is not used and will not be on the test results. To get your test results, you will be given a code number.
- **Confidential HIV testing** means that your name will be used on your test results.
- If you get an anonymous HIV test, you will not receive a piece of paper with your name and your test results. If you need a copy of your HIV test results, you should take a confidential test.

**How is HIV testing done?**

Typical HIV tests are done on blood or oral fluids. Specimens are sent to a lab and you get your results in about one week. When testing blood, a needle will be used to draw blood from a vein in your arm. When testing oral fluids, they are collected on a swab from your mouth.

Rapid test: Some clinics or testing sites offer rapid testing. This is a test done on a small amount of blood from the tip of your finger or from fluid in your mouth. You will get results in that same visit. If your result is reactive (shows possible signs of infection), you will need more testing.

**How will this test help me?**

- **The test will tell you whether or not you have HIV.** People can have HIV for years and not know it unless they get tested.
- **If you are infected,** it can help you get proper treatment and learn how to avoid spreading HIV to other people.
- **If you are not infected,** it can help you learn how to reduce your risk of getting HIV.

**Who will know the results of my test?**

In Michigan, all HIV test information is confidential, by law.

- **A negative result** means you are not infected with HIV,
- **OR you have been infected too recently for it to show up on the test.**
- **If you recently had sex without a condom or shared needles,** you should get another test in about six weeks. This is because sometimes HIV tests cannot detect recent infection.

**What does a negative (or "non-reactive") result mean?**

- A **negative result** means you are not infected with HIV,
- **OR you have been infected too recently for it to show up on the test.**
- **If you recently had sex without a condom or shared needles,** you should get another test in about six weeks. This is because sometimes HIV tests cannot detect recent infection.

**What does a positive result mean?**

- A **positive result** means that you are living with HIV.
- **You should see a doctor as soon as possible.** The person who gave you your test results can help you find a doctor if you don’t have one.
- **If you have HIV, you can pass your infection to other people through sex, sharing needles, or through birth or breastfeeding if you are or will be a mother.**

**In Michigan, if I have HIV, will I definitely develop AIDS or get sick?**

No. Today there are many treatments for HIV. These treatments can prevent serious illness, including AIDS. If you get care quickly, you have a good chance for a long and healthy life.

**Who should I tell if I have HIV?**

- **Current, past and future sexual and/or needle-sharing partners should be notified.**
- **Your local health department can also help to notify partners.** They will do this without using your name or sharing any information about you. Your doctor, health care provider or counselor that performed the test can connect you with the local health department.

Michigan law requires you to tell any current or future sexual partner that you have HIV before having any kind of sex with them.

- **The law also requires that your doctor or someone from the local health department talk to you about this.**