WHAT IF I HAVE

MORE QUESTIONS?

- Feel free to ask the **health professional who gave you this pamphlet** any questions you might have.
- **Call the Michigan HIV/STD hotline:**

  800-872-2437
- **Visit the Bureau of HIV and STI Programs website** for more information Michigan.gov/HIVSTI
- **Visit the CDC's HIV/AIDS website** for more information CDC.gov/HIV

MDHHS

Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HIV TESTING

WHAT IS HIV
AND HOW IS IT SPREAD?

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection is a long-term illness that damages the body's immune system, or its ability to fight off disease. HIV spreads through blood, semen, vaginal fluids, and breast milk. Here are ways you can get or give HIV infection:

- By having vaginal, anal, or oral sex without a condom.
- By 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.

With HIV medication, the body's ability to fight off germs can improve.

WHAT IS AN HIV TEST?

It is a simple test, done by taking a blood sample, that determines 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.

- Whatever your age, you should have an HIV test if you are sexually active, or have shared needles or works for injecting drugs.
- Women who are pregnant or considering pregnancy should also get an HIV test.

CAN ANYONE

MAKE ME TAKE
AN HIV TEST?

Under Michigan law, unless you are ordered by a judge, or you are a prisoner entering into a correctional facility, getting an HIV test is your decision. No one can test you without your consent.

Can I change my mind after I consent to the test?

- Yes, you can change your mind at any time before the lab runs the test.
- If you change your mind, you must give your health care provider a written request saying that you do not want the test to be run.

Can someone under age 18 take the test without their parents' consent?

- Yes. Minors, age 13 and older, have the right to take the test for HIV without their parents' knowledge or consent.

HOW IS
HIV TESTING DONE?

Common HIV tests are done with a blood sample. Specimens are sent to a lab and you get results in about one week. When testing blood, a needle will be used to draw blood from a vein.

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. 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.
- A **positive test** will allow you to know your status. Knowing your positive status empowers you to begin treatment and continue to live a healthy life. People with HIV can avoid spreading the virus through proper treatment and safe sex practices.
- If you **test negative**, the person who gave you your results can help you learn ways to reduce your risk of getting HIV.

WHAT DOES A
NEGATIVE
(OR "NON-REACTIVE") RESULT MEAN?

- A **negative result** means you do not have 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 infections.

THERE ARE TOOLS AVAILABLE TO HELP
REDUCE THE RISK
OF CONTRACTING HIV:

- PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis), a once-a-day pill that when taken every day can help prevent you from becoming infected with HIV.
- PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis). PEP is different than PrEP. PEP is taken up to 72 hours after a possible exposure and involves a month-long process of taking anti-HIV medication.
- Use male or internal condoms every time.
- Use water or silicone-based lubricants to help keep the condom from breaking.
- Avoid use of oil-based lube with latex condoms, as this will break the condom down and cause it to tear.
- Use clean needles; do not share needles or other equipment used to inject drugs.
- Check for local needle exchange programs.

WHAT DOES A
POSITIVE
RESULT MEAN?

- A **positive result** means 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.
- 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.
- You can avoid passing your infection to other people through proper treatment and practicing safe sex by using condoms every time. The person who gave you your test results can help you plan ways to keep from passing your infection on to others.
- If you need help with case management or Early Intervention Services (EIS), please visit Michigan.gov/HIVSTI.
- The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services has many programs that can help you at any time if you need assistance.

Michigan law requires you to tell your sexual partner that you have HIV before having vaginal or anal sex with them, unless you are medically suppressed and have no intent to spread the virus.

WHO WILL KNOW THE
RESULTS
OF MY TEST?

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

- There are very strict rules about who is allowed to see your information.
- Health care workers that are involved in your care may see your test results.
- Health insurance companies, Medicare and Medicaid, if they are paying all or part of the cost of your health care, will also see test results.
- HIV tests are reported to the local health department.
- If you have HIV, Michigan law requires that your doctor or someone from the local health department notify all of your known sexual and/or needle-sharing partners that may have been exposed to HIV. They do this without using your name, or sharing any information about you.
- It is illegal to discriminate against people living with HIV.

IF I'M HIV POSITIVE, WHAT ARE
MY OPTIONS?

Today there are many treatments for HIV that can prevent serious illness, including AIDS. If you get care quickly, and maintain care, you can live a long and healthy life.

Whom 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.