PREVENT TEST TREAT

TOOK THE TEST

"I was worried – I prefer to know where I stand, even if it's bad news."

"You don't get sick for some years after getting HIV, especially if you have care and support - but if you don't know you're infected, you can't do anything about it."

"My family is the most important thing in my life – if I know my status I can protect them better."

"I took some risks when I was younger - I needed to know if this would affect my health."

"My employer offers treatment for employees and their families – I took the test so I could get treated if I needed to."

"I was afraid that people might find out but the testing was very confidential and reassuring."

"I lost two brothers to HIV and AIDS. We found out about their status when it was too late."



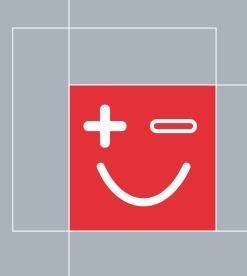
PREVENT TEST TREAT

The ILO Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work

Website: www.ilo.org/aids



testing and counselling: the gateway to wellness





LLOAIDS

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WHY TAKE THE TEST?

Most people with HIV don't know it. There aren't symptoms. It doesn't show. But HIV leads to sickness later - that's what we know as AIDS.

A test has two big benefits – you can be sure and you can take control:

- if you are negative, you can protect yourself and those you're close to
- if you are positive, you can get access to care and support (increasingly this includes treatment) and learn ways to keep yourself healthy.

The test isn't an end but a beginning – it gives you the knowledge you need to live positively and responsibly, with or without HIV.

WHAT IS THE TEST?

HIV tests use small samples of blood, urine or saliva to look for antibodies to the virus. The type of test available varies in different countries, and the result may take some weeks, but it's increasingly common to find 'rapid tests' that give you the result in less than an hour.

KEY PRINCIPLES OF TESTING

IT SHOULD BE VOLUNTARY

CONFIDENTIAL

accompanied by **Counselling** (pre- and post- test)

BFFORF YOU TAKE THE TEST

Think carefully. Ask questions. Know what services are – and are not – available for care, treatment and support, in the community and at your workplace.

Finding out your status can be a life-changing experience. The pre-test counselling gives you the opportunity to think through the changes that might follow, especially if the result is positive. If you're too worried, of course you don't have to go ahead with the test.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

IF THE RESULT IS NEGATIVE

IF THE RESULT IS POSITIVE

Many people living with HIV/AIDS say that what helps the most is the emotional support and friendship of those around them - family, friends, neighbours and colleagues. There's no danger of HIV infection from casual contact so we all have the responsibility to extend care and acceptance to those affected.

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