

Can I refuse to be tested?

Yes. While an HIV test is included in a standard group of prenatal tests given to all pregnant women in Nevada, you may refuse to give your written consent for the HIV test. Also, parents or guardians of newborns have the right to refuse testing if it is contrary to your religious beliefs.

What are the different HIV screening tests available in the United States?

In most cases the EIA (enzyme immunoassay), used on blood drawn from a vein, is the most common screening test used to look for antibodies to HIV. A positive (reactive) EIA must be used with a follow-up (confirmatory) test such as the Western blot to make a positive diagnosis. There are EIA tests that use other body fluids to look for antibodies to HIV. These include:

Oral Fluid Tests: Use oral fluid (not saliva) that is collected from the mouth using a special collection device. This is an EIA antibody test similar to the standard blood EIA test. A follow-up confirmatory Western blot uses the same oral fluid sample.

Urine Tests: Use urine instead of blood. The sensitivity and specificity (accuracy) are somewhat less than that of the blood and oral fluid tests. This is also an EIA antibody test similar to blood EIA tests and requires a follow-up confirmatory Western blot using the same urine sample.

Rapid Tests: Rapid tests (screening in 20 minutes) use blood from a vein or from a finger stick, or oral fluid, to look for the presence of antibodies to HIV. As is true for all screening tests, a reactive rapid HIV test result must be confirmed with a follow-up confirmatory test before a final diagnosis of infection can be made.

How to Prevent HIV

- HIV is spread through sexual contact with an infected person.
- Sharing of needles and/or syringes (primarily for drug injection) with someone who is infected.
- Babies born to HIV-infected women may become infected before or during birth or through breast-feeding after birth.

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State of Nevada

The information provided is in compliance with Nevada Senate Bill 266



HIV Perinatal Testing

We're Here to Assist You

Information and Comprehensive
Guide to Services Provided

(775) 684.5900
<http://health.nv.gov>

FACT: Even if a mother has HIV/AIDS, her baby doesn't have to

Please, get tested for HIV/AIDS before your baby is born!

You just found out that you're having a baby. It's an exciting time, full of hope and joy. You want to take good care of yourself—and do everything you can to protect the new life growing inside of you. These days, this includes getting tested for HIV as early as possible in your pregnancy.

What is HIV? How does it spread?

HIV is the **H**uman **I**mmunodeficiency **V**irus, the virus that causes AIDS. HIV weakens the immune system, which is the body's defense against disease. HIV spreads through body fluids such as blood, semen, and vaginal fluid. It can be passed by having sex without a condom or by sharing needles with a person with HIV. And most important for you to know now, HIV can also be passed from a mother with the virus to her baby.

Getting a new life off
to a great start...



What is AIDS?

AIDS, or the **A**cquired **I**mmunodeficiency **S**ndrome is a human viral disease that damages the immune system which undermines the body's ability to defend itself from infection and disease. Caused by HIV, or the human immunodeficiency virus, AIDS leaves an infected person vulnerable to infections. These infections are harmless in healthy people, but for those whose immune systems have been weakened, they can prove fatal. Although there is no cure for AIDS, new drug therapies are available that can prolong life spans and improve the quality of life for infected people.

WHY is HIV testing important for pregnant women?

- An infected woman can pass HIV to her baby during pregnancy, during labor, or through breastfeeding.
- If a pregnant woman's infection is found before she gives birth, doctors can treat her with drugs that fight HIV. These drugs can greatly reduce the risk of her baby being infected with HIV. The consequences of not getting tested could be a baby born with HIV infection.

Today, women with HIV who get treatment are living longer and staying healthier.

If a pregnant woman has HIV, she can take action to protect her health and her baby. Drugs are now available that can improve the woman's health, prolong her life, and help prevent her baby from getting HIV.

A woman with HIV may have surgery (cesarean or "C" section) to help protect her baby from the disease. A doctor or nurse can talk with her about this option.

It's important to remember that HIV can pass through breast milk. So if a woman has HIV, she should not breastfeed.