

Dear Patient:

New York State Department of Health requires all hospitals to offer HIV Testing to all persons between the ages of 13 and 64, regardless of apparent risk. You are encouraged to accept testing; it may provide you with important information about your health and staying healthy.

7 Key Facts to Know Before Getting an HIV Test

These are important points to know about HIV testing:

1. HIV is the virus that causes AIDS. It can be spread through unprotected sex (vaginal, anal, or oral sex) with someone who has HIV; contact with HIV-infected blood by sharing needles (piercing, tattooing, drug equipment, including needles); by HIV-infected pregnant women to their infants during pregnancy or delivery, or by breast feeding.
2. There are treatments for HIV/AIDS that can help a person stay healthy.
3. People with HIV/AIDS can use safe practices to protect others from becoming infected. Safe practices also protect people with HIV/AIDS from being infected with different strains of HIV.
4. Testing is voluntary and can be done without giving your name at a public testing center (anonymous testing).
5. By law, HIV test results and other related information are kept confidential (private).
6. Discrimination based on a person's HIV status is illegal. People who are discriminated against can get help.
7. Consent for HIV-related testing remains in effect until it is withdrawn verbally or in writing. If the consent was given for a specific period of time, the consent applies to that time period only. Persons may withdraw their consent at any time.