



2020

ENGLISCH / TEST

GOOD TO KNOW

Information on HIV testing

HIV – ARE YOU AFFECTED?

HIV and AIDS are present all over the world – including Germany.

If you have been infected with HIV, you can take medication to prevent the life-threatening disease AIDS. To this end, detecting HIV early is crucial.



WHAT IS HIV AND WHAT IS AIDS?

HIV is a virus. It weakens the immune system that defends the body against diseases. If someone has been infected with HIV and does not take any medication, they may develop the life-threatening disease AIDS.

HOW IS HIV TRANSMITTED?

HIV can be transmitted

- when having unprotected sex with someone who carries the virus and is not taking any HIV medication
- from an HIV-positive mother to the child, if the mother is not taking any HIV medication
- when sharing syringes during drug use.

After having been infected, you may still feel well for some years, even though HIV causes the immune system to become weaker and weaker. An HIV test can show whether you are infected or not.

GOOD REASONS FOR GETTING TESTED FOR HIV

- Once you know that you are infected, you can start taking HIV medication – the sooner, the better. That way, you can still have a good and long life despite HIV and your medication also prevents sexual transmission of HIV.
- Mother-to-child transmissions of HIV can be prevented – but to do so, the mother needs to first get tested for HIV.
- Once you know that you are infected, you can prevent HIV from being transmitted to others. In addition, partners and children can get tested as well.

WHERE AND HOW TO GET TESTED FOR HIV?

- It is best to get tested for HIV at the local public health office (Gesundheitsamt) or AIDS service organization (Aidshilfe), where you can take the test anonymously either free of charge or for a small fee (usually about EUR 10–25). Addresses are available at aidshilfe.de/teststellen.
- You can also go to see a doctor, but in this case you will need to provide your name and the test result will be entered in your medical record.
- You can also test yourself for HIV using a self-test kit (e.g. from the pharmacy). It costs about EUR 20.

Some tests require taking a blood sample; for others, a small drop of blood taken from the finger is sufficient. We recommend that you seek counseling before getting tested. Addresses are available at en.aidshilfe.de/counseling.

WHAT DOES THE RESULT MEAN?

If your HIV test result is **“negative”**, you are not infected with HIV.

If your HIV test result is **“positive”**, you are infected with HIV. In that case, you should see a doctor who is experienced in treating HIV to discuss what you can do for your health, what HIV medication you should be taking and how you can protect others from getting infected. Addresses of HIV-experienced doctors are available at the AIDS service organizations (Aidshilfen).

Addresses: aidshilfe.de/aidshilfen.

If you do not have health insurance, contact the local public health office (Gesundheitsamt) or AIDS service organization (Aidshilfe) to get help anyway.

By the way: An HIV infection does not affect your residence status: You do not have to leave Germany because of an HIV infection.

WHO WILL FIND OUT ABOUT THE TEST AND THE RESULT?

If you decide to get tested at the local public health office (Gesundheitsamt) or AIDS service organization (Aidshilfe), you will not need to provide your name and no one will find out about the test. If you decide to get tested at a doctor's office, however, your name and the test result will be entered in your medical record.

Doctors, the doctor's office staff, counselors and interpreters are bound by professional secrecy – they are not allowed to disclose who has come to see them and on what matter.

Further information/Counseling (also in English):



aidshilfe-beratung.de | Tel: 0180-33-19411* (Mo-Fr 9 am – 9 pm, Sat-Sun 12 noon – 2 pm)

*9 ct./min. from the German landline network, max. 42 ct./min. from German mobile phone networks

Impressum

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