

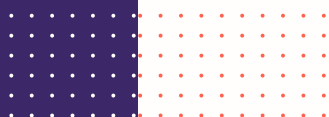
ONTARIO



HIV SELF-TEST GUIDE



**Get connected
to what you need**



I AM.

Before you get started, here's what you should know

First, take care of yourself and your health, the power is in your hand

Testing is a good way to take care of your health. It's your choice to take an HIV test, and we understand it can be stressful.

Knowing your HIV status is key to making informed decisions about your health and well-being. And, there is support to help you throughout the process if you need it.



If your HIV self-test is negative or positive

If your HIV self-test is positive, there are treatments available that can be tailored to fit your life. HIV treatment is highly effective allowing people to live a long and healthy life. For more information, see page 3.

If your HIV self-test is negative, stay informed, use highly effective prevention strategies like harm reduction, condoms, or PrEP and get tested regularly. For more information, see page 5.



Informed consent for confirmatory testing

If you test positive on your self-test, you will need to get this followed up with a confirmatory test. For this, you must give “informed consent” — this involves understanding the testing procedures, giving permission for the confirmatory test and knowing whether your name will be shared with public health authorities. For more information, see page 4.

Some things to keep in mind before you do your self-test for HIV

Before you go ahead, it's important to be aware of a few legal obligations around disclosure if you test positive for HIV. This means understanding things like when and how to disclose your HIV-positive status once you know and the potential for legal consequences if you don't disclose. For legal information and resources, see page 4.



I got a positive result on my HIV self-test, what's next?

It's important to take a moment for yourself

You might feel overwhelmed. What is helpful to know is that with treatment and care, you can live a long, healthy life. If you're comfortable with it, maybe reach out to someone close to you who can give you some support.



The next step is to get confirmation

If your self-test result is positive, it means you most likely have HIV. A second test, known as a confirmatory test, is needed to verify this.

To get this confirmatory test, you will need to see a healthcare provider or go to a testing clinic. To find out where to go, visit: wheretocatie.ca or visit: www.sexualhealthontario.ca/en/chat to speak directly with someone or engage in an e-chat.



Confirmatory testing can be done nominally (testing with your name) or anonymously (testing without your name). If a nominal test is done and you have a positive HIV test, this and your name will be shared with your local public health unit.

For more information on anonymous testing in Ontario, visit: www.cleo.on.ca/en/publications/hivtest



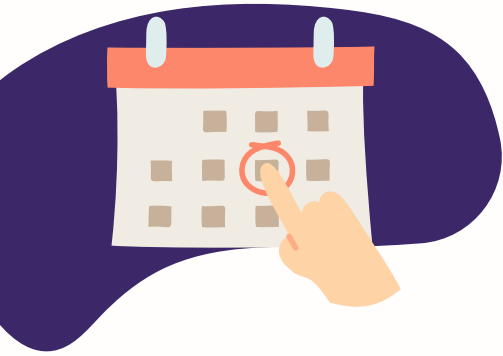
A healthcare provider or a peer worker can support you too

There are lots of options for you to get support. You can see a healthcare provider, or a peer worker or visit your local AIDS service organization. If you don't have a healthcare provider, don't worry – there is a list of options provided for you (see page 6).

If you want to chat about your HIV self-test results, you can also book an appointment with a peer navigator who has lived experience of HIV and can support you through this process (see page 6).



My confirmatory HIV test came back positive



If it comes back positive, it means you have HIV

When you have HIV, a healthcare provider can discuss your care and treatment options. The sooner you start treatment, the better.

Today's HIV treatment prevents the virus from making copies of itself within your body, which keeps the amount of virus (viral load) so low that it is undetectable by tests. When your viral load is undetectable, your immune system can work properly, which allows you to live a long and healthy life. What's more is that when your viral load is undetectable, you can't pass HIV on to your sexual partners.



If you have any concerns, talk with a healthcare provider and/or a peer health worker at your local community-based or AIDS service organization (see page 6).

What about telling other people?

There may be situations where you may not be comfortable telling someone that you have just tested positive for HIV, and that's okay. You have rights, and legally, you do not need to tell most people that you are HIV positive.



The situation is different when it comes to sex partners. The criminal law says that, in certain circumstances, you must tell your sex partners that you have HIV before you have sex.

To better understand the law, contact the HIV Legal Network at www.hivlegalnetwork.ca or the HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario (HALCO) at halco.org or 416-370-7790 or 1-888-705-8889 (toll-free).

My HIV self-test was negative

If your self-test is negative, it means that you likely don't have the virus.

What you need to know is that the test does not always identify recent infections. If you may have been exposed to HIV in the last six weeks, you should test again to be sure that you don't have HIV. For details on testing in the window period, visit hivtestingontario.ca.

Also, if you are sexually active or use injection drugs, it may be a good idea to test regularly.

HERE IS WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. Protect yourself and your partner (s)

3. If you had a recent exposure, get access to PEP within 72 hours

2. Consider access to PrEP

4. Prevention support is available too



1. Protect yourself and your partner(s) from HIV, Hepatitis C and STIs by:

- Using condoms the right way every time
- Always using new needles and other injection equipment every time you use drugs

2. Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)

- PrEP is a medication that can keep you from getting HIV
- There are different ways you can take it to protect yourself, to learn more visit: www.catie.ca/prep

3. Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)

- PEP is a medication that you can take after you have been exposed to HIV to help prevent you from getting it. To be effective, it has to be taken as soon as possible or within 72 hours of exposure, visit: catie.ca/client-publication/pep-preventing-hiv-after-a-potential-exposure

4. Prevention Support

- Call the information lines in the HIV self-test kit
- Visit wheretocatie.ca to find help.

Linkage to care: Ontario

To access HIV confirmatory testing, treatment, care and support:

Schedule an appointment with a healthcare provider

There are two ways to find confirmatory testing near you:

1. where.to.catie.ca
2. Sexual Health InfoLine Ontario (SHILO)
1-800-668-2437 ; sexualhealthontario.ca/en/chat

To find HIV anonymous testing sites, visit:

- SHILO; 1-800-668-2437;
sexualhealthontario.ca/en/chat

To find AIDS Service Organizations near you, visit:

- where.to.catie.ca
- i-am.health/get-support

For anonymous confirmatory testing information on what gets reported to Public Health authorities, visit:

- www.cleo.on.ca/en/publications/hivtest

For more information on disclosure and legal information, visit:

- www.hivlegalnetwork.ca/site/our-work/indigenous-communities/hiv-criminalization-information-for-indigenous-communities

For more information, visit [I-AM.Health](http://i-am.health) or scan the QR code:



To book an appointment with a peer navigator, scan the QR code:



To access to PEP or PrEP:

Emergency rooms and physicians can prescribe PEP treatment.

Physicians or nurse practitioners can prescribe PrEP. Talk to a provider about PrEP

PrEPstart Program:
ontarioprep.ca/prepstart

Sexual Health Infoline Ontario (SHILO):

- 1-800-668-2437
- sexualhealthontario.ca/en/chat

Accessing harm reduction supplies:

To find harm reduction supplies:

Visit where.to.catie.ca

Ontario Harm Reduction Distribution Program

- ohrdp.ca/find-supplies

Mental Health & Addiction Treatment Services:

- connexontario.ca/en-ca/

Rainbow Health Ontario's Service Provider Directory:

- rainbowhealthontario.ca/lgbt2sq-health/service-provider-directory/

Sexual Health Infoline Ontario (SHILO):

- 1-800-668-2437
- sexualhealthontario.ca/en/chat

This guide was developed through partnerships with:

reachnexus

ninecircles
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE



CATIE