

## Information on Negative HIV Test Results

You have received a negative HIV antibody test result today. This almost always means you are not infected with HIV. However, it is important for you to understand what an HIV test result means and that you may need to be retested.

### Why You May Need To Be Retested For HIV

The period between the time of infection and the time that an HIV test can detect the antibodies to HIV infection is called the window period. During the window period, an infected person does have HIV and can pass HIV to other people, even if his or her HIV test is negative. If you have engaged in risk behaviors for HIV in the three months prior to your test, you should be re-tested three months after your last possible exposure. Your doctor will answer any questions you may have about re-testing for HIV.

### If You Are Planning To Have A Baby, Or Are Pregnant

It is important for you to know your HIV status. If you are the father, you can pass HIV to the mother. If you are the mother, you can pass HIV to your baby during pregnancy, delivery or through breastfeeding. The sooner you know your HIV status, the sooner you can get treatment for your health and lower the chance of passing HIV to your baby.

### A Negative Test Result Means You Still Have To Protect Yourself From HIV

How you can lower your chances for getting HIV:

- Abstain - Not having sex or sharing needles, syringes or other drug injection equipment with a person who has HIV or whose HIV status you don't know is a sure way to protect yourself from HIV. If you choose to have sex or inject drugs, there are ways to lower your chances of becoming infected with HIV.
- Use a latex male condom or a female condom. Condoms work very well to prevent HIV if you use them the right way, every time you have sex.
- If you do shoot drugs:
  - Use new needles and equipment each time you shoot up.
  - Do not share needles, syringes or works.
  - NEVER buy needles on the street, even if they look new.
  - If you are 18 or older, you can buy new needles at many drugstores.
  - Syringe exchange programs provide needles free of charge.
- Do not share needles for ear piercing, body piercing or tattooing. If someone with HIV used a needle before you, you could get HIV.
- If you are drunk or high, you are less likely to think about protecting yourself and others from HIV. Using any drug lowers your ability to make decisions about safer sex and using clean needles and works.

### Resources:

**AIDS Hotlines:**     **English-** 1-800-541-AIDS /     **Spanish-** 1-800-233-SIDA  
TTY Information Line: 1-212-421-1220.  
Voice callers use the New York Relay: 711 or 1-800-421-1220

**Website:**            <http://www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/aids/index.htm>