

MANITOBA HIV PROGRAM

HIV TESTING

GUIDELINES

Know the HIV status of all patients in your care.

Patient Characteristics	Recommendations
Under 12 years of age	Routine HIV testing is not recommended. HIV testing may be clinically indicated for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Infants less than 18 months of age, consult Pediatric Infectious Diseases – Children 18 months to 11 years of age if a risk for HIV acquisition is identified
12 to 70 years of age	Routine HIV test every 5 years. HIV testing should be offered more frequently if clinically indicated.*
12 to 70 years of age and additional risks for HIV acquisition are identified, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (gbMSM) – People who inject drugs (PWID) or share drug use equipment – People having unprotected sex with multiple partners 	Routine HIV test every year. HIV testing should be offered more frequently if clinically indicated.*
12 to 70 years of age who belong to populations currently experiencing a higher burden of HIV infection, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – People from countries where HIV is endemic** – Indigenous Peoples*** 	Offer HIV test every year if HIV status is unknown or additional risks for HIV acquisition are identified. HIV testing should be offered more frequently if clinically indicated.*
Over 70 years of age and HIV status is not known	One HIV test if no previous testing

**This includes Sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, Central/South Central America and Asia. In 2018, 22% of new clients to care in Manitoba self-identified as African/Caribbean/Black (ACB). Eighteen percent of clients were from Southeast Asia and Latin America, and 6% were from East and Southeast Asia.⁷

***In 2018, over 50% of new clients to care self-identified as Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit and Metis).⁷ The higher burden of HIV in Indigenous Peoples is related to historic and ongoing colonial impacts and structural racism. Providers should increase their understanding of the historic and current context of HIV in Indigenous Peoples, and increase their knowledge of culturally safe care in order to safely inquire about STBBI risk factors and offer HIV testing.⁸

***An HIV test should also be offered to all patients when:**

- The patient is new to your care and their HIV status is unknown.
- Testing for or diagnosing a sexually transmitted blood born infection (STBBI) including gonorrhoea, chlamydia, syphilis, hepatitis B or hepatitis C.
- Testing for or diagnosing tuberculosis.
- Diagnostic blood work is ordered for [a new or worsening medical condition that may be indicative of HIV](#).⁹
- The patient presents with symptoms of acute HIV infection (for example, fever, sore throat, rash, fatigue, muscle aches and headache).
- A risk for HIV acquisition is identified.
- The patient is a survivor of sexual assault.
- The patient is pregnant. Offer HIV testing at the first prenatal visit, in the third trimester, and at delivery if HIV status is unknown.
- The patient requests an HIV test.

Obtaining informed consent for HIV testing is the same as it is for any other diagnostic test or treatment in Manitoba.

Management of HIV Test Results

Test Result	Management
HIV Negative	Consistent as with management of other negative test results in your office. When patient is notified of their negative test result, provide counselling on HIV prevention strategies using the Manitoba HIV Program HIV Prevention Guidelines .
HIV Positive	Notify patient. Reassure patient and counsel on risk reduction. Refer patient to the Manitoba HIV Program .
HIV Indeterminate	Repeat HIV test in 2-4 weeks.

Key messages for Primary Care Providers

- Normalize HIV testing in the general population by offering HIV testing to all patients as part of routine care.
- It is estimated that up to 25% of people living with HIV (PLHIV) in Canada are unaware of their infection.¹⁰
- 25% to 50% of PLHIV are diagnosed late in the course of HIV infection.¹⁰
- Early HIV diagnosis is critical to maximize the health benefits of care and treatment for PLHIV.
- When PLHIV adhere to treatment and maintain an undetectable viral load, the risk of sexual transmission of HIV to others is negligible. When HIV is undetectable, it's untransmittable (U=U).
- Test one, test for all: Offer testing for all STBBI's each time an HIV-STBBI test is offered, or when a patient tests positive for a STBBI.
- Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) medications are now covered in Manitoba and are an effective way to prevent new HIV infections. [Register here to be a PrEP prescriber](#).
- Counsel patients on HIV prevention strategies using the [Manitoba HIV Program HIV Prevention Guidelines](#)

For more information, refer to
[HIV Testing for the Province of British Columbia](#)

References: <https://mbHIV.ca/guidelines>