

# HIV testing

## Information for patients, relatives and carers

### Introduction

If you are aged 16 or over and are having blood tests done during your visit today we will also do an HIV test.

### What is HIV?

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus that affects the immune system. If you have HIV you can get free medication to keep you well so that you can live a long, full and healthy life. Without treatment HIV may cause severe illness (AIDS) and death.

Many people living with HIV are not aware that they have it. Symptoms can take years to develop. The best way to protect your health is to test for HIV regularly.

We recommend that everyone coming to the hospital has an HIV test.

### Test results

- If your result is **negative**, this means there's no sign of HIV
- If the result is **reactive** this means you need further tests to confirm if you have HIV. A specialist nurse will call you within five working days and arrange for you to come in and see a team of HIV specialists who are very experienced with supporting and caring for people living with HIV

**Please note we will only call you if your result is reactive.**

### What if I don't want to have an HIV test?

Please speak to your doctor or nurse in the department who will cancel it. If you choose not to have the test, this will not affect your care in anyway.

### Further information and support

We offer a full range of sexual health and HIV services within the department of sexual health and HIV located in the Jefferiss wing at St Mary's Hospital. You can call us for a telephone assessment on **020 2231 1225**. For further information, including information about our emergency walk-in service visit: [www.imperial.nhs.uk/our-services/sexual-health-and-hiv](http://www.imperial.nhs.uk/our-services/sexual-health-and-hiv)

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## How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3312 7777**. You can also email PALS at [imperial.pals@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.pals@nhs.net)

The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street  
London W2 1NY

Email: [ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net](mailto:ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net)

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

## Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:  
[imperial.communications@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.communications@nhs.net)

## Wi-fi

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