

Why am I having an HIV test today?

What is HIV?

HIV stands for the Human Immunodeficiency Virus. It is a virus which weakens the body's immune system - the body's defence against diseases. If left untreated people with HIV are at greater risk of certain infections and cancers and can have a reduced life expectancy.

Can HIV be treated?

There is no cure for HIV but it can be treated, sometimes with just one pill a day. People with HIV can have a normal life expectancy if they are diagnosed early and can lead full and active lives.

Why am I being offered an HIV test today?

- Lambeth and Southwark have the highest levels of HIV in the UK
- A quarter of people in the UK with HIV do not know they have the infection.
- There is no reason why people in the UK should get sick or die from HIV and one of the most common reasons that they do is because they do not know they have the infection.
- Anyone can have HIV.

What happens next?

If you are having a blood test today, an extra sample will be taken for an HIV test. If you do not want to have an HIV test please let the person taking your blood know. If you have any further questions please ask the doctor or nurse looking after you.

What if I already know I have HIV?

Please let the person taking your blood know so that we don't repeat your HIV test.

What happens to my results?

If your HIV test comes back positive, the HIV team will get in touch with you.

Otherwise, if you have not heard from us one week after you have had the blood test you can assume your test is negative. If you have any further queries please call King's College Hospital switch on 020 3299 9000 extension 34945.

For more information about HIV please go to the Terence Higgins website
www.tht.org.uk