

Why am I having an HIV test today?

What is HIV?

Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a virus which weakens the body's immune system, its defence against diseases. Without treatment, people with HIV are at greater risk of certain infections and cancers and can have a reduced life expectancy.

Why am I being offered an HIV test today?

- Lambeth and Southwark have the highest levels of HIV in the UK.
- About 1 in 10 people living in London with HIV do not know they have the virus.
- There is no reason why people in the UK should get sick or die from HIV.
- One of the most common reasons why they do is because they do not know they have HIV.
- Anyone can have HIV.

Can HIV be treated?

- There is no cure for HIV but with the right treatment, people with the virus can have a normal life expectancy.
- The right treatment also prevents HIV from being passed to someone else, such as through sex.

What happens next?

- If you are having a blood test today, we will usually take an extra sample for a HIV test.
- If you do not want a HIV test, please let the person taking your blood know.
- If you have any questions, ask the doctor or nurse caring for you.

What if I already know I have HIV?

Please let the person taking your blood know, so we do not repeat your test.

What happens to my results?

- If your HIV test comes back positive, the Results Team will contact you and explain what happens next.
- We will usually contact you within a week of your test. If we cannot get through, we may send you a letter.
- Occasionally if we cannot contact you, we may contact your GP.
- Please help us by making sure we have your most up-to-date contact details.

If you do not contact me, does that mean my HIV test was negative?

- If we do not contact you, it usually means your test was negative (i.e. you do not have HIV).
- Sometimes we are unable to test the blood we take from you due to a technical reason.
- If you want to know whether your blood was tested or to confirm your test was negative, please call the Results Team, tel **020 3299 3759**.

If you have any concerns, call the Results Team on 020 3299 3759 or speak to one of your healthcare staff or your GP.