



# HIV and HIV Testing

We offer HIV testing to all patients at least once between ages 15 and 18, no matter their risk. This is because the rate of HIV infection in Minnesota is high enough to meet national and state guidelines for routine testing. In fact, the highest rate of new cases of HIV in Minnesota is in young adults.

## Important information about HIV:

* HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is the virus that causes AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). The HIV virus attacks an infected person’s immune system and can make them very sick and even cause death.
* HIV can be spread through any kind of unprotected sex (vaginal, anal, or oral) with someone who has HIV; by contact with HIV-infected blood by sharing needles (piercing, tattooing, or drug use); by HIV-infected pregnant women to their infants during pregnancy or delivery, or by breastfeeding.
* Many people who are infected with HIV do not know they have the virus. Signs of the virus can take a long time appear.
* The only way to know if a person has HIV is to test for it.
* There are treatments that help people with HIV/AIDS stay healthy and live long lives.

## Why am I being tested for HIV?

* More than 1 in 5 new HIV diagnoses in the US are in youth ages 13-24 years.
* Of all age groups, youth with HIV are the least likely to access the healthcare they need.
* The rate of HIV infection in Minnesota is high enough that testing of all 15 to 18 year olds at least once, no matter their risk for HIV is recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and Minnesota Department of Health.
* Offering HIV testing is required by the Child and Teen Checkups program.
* If you or your healthcare provider believe you are at high risk for HIV or other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), they may recommend that you get tested more often.

## Important information about HIV testing:

* We will not share the results with your parent or guardian unless you ask us to.
* If the initial test is positive for the HIV virus, a follow-up test will be done.
* Although HIV tests are almost always accurate, follow-up testing helps your provider to be sure the diagnosis is right.

Prevention is the best way to avoid getting HIV. Ask your provider how to reduce your risk.

Sincerely,

Provider’s/clinic name
Clinic
Address
###-###-####
(optional) Author’s contact information
[Clinic](http://www.health.state.mn.us/) website

*Optional: your logo*