



PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

HIV TESTING IN THE WHITWORTH CLINIC

WHY ARE WE OFFERING A HIV TEST?

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is now a long term manageable medical condition, and it is important to diagnose HIV infection as early as possible for the best outcomes on treatment.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence recently published guidelines advising that routine HIV testing should be offered to all patients attending termination of pregnancy services. It is already offered to everyone attending the antenatal clinic.

As many people do not realise, they may have been at risk of HIV infection and because symptoms can take many years to develop, we hope that by offering this test we have the opportunity to diagnose the infection at an earlier stage and allow people to start treatment sooner and achieve a near-normal life expectancy.

Up to 33% of people in the UK are not aware of their diagnosis - for this reason all healthcare professionals are expected to offer HIV tests in hospitals and the community much more than was done in the past.

WHAT IS HIV?

HIV is a virus that is transmitted through sexual contact and blood products/contaminated needles. It affects the immune system and over time, weakens the body's defences against infections.

HOW DO YOU TEST FOR HIV?

The test is a simple blood test that would be taken at the same time as your blood group and haemoglobin level blood tests. HIV can take up to 4 weeks after infection to show in the blood so if you think you have been exposed to HIV within the last 4 weeks you should let the nurse/doctor know so we can arrange for this test to be repeated.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY TEST IS POSITIVE?

If your routine test is positive, we will contact you and ask you to come to repeat the test and confirm your diagnosis. We will refer you quickly to the local HIV clinic and will be seen by HIV specialists.

Testing positive is often a shock, but it is much worse for your health to live with HIV that is not being treated. Medication for HIV is now very safe and effective.

HOW DO I GET THE RESULT?

You will receive the result as a telephone consultation 2-4 weeks after the procedure. It is important that we have your correct telephone number so we can contact you. You will receive your result whether the test is positive or negative.

If you do not hear from us in 2-4 weeks, please can you telephone us on 0161 276 6283, on a Tuesday or Wednesday between 15:30 and 17:30.

If you require any further information or clarification of terminology, please do not hesitate to talk to one of the doctors or nurses, who will be happy to discuss your concerns with you.

CONTACT DETAILS



The Whitworth Clinic

Tel: 0161 276 6283

(Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 08:00 - 18:00 / Friday: 08:00 - 16:00)



<https://mft.nhs.uk/saint-marys/services/gynaecology/whitworth-clinic/>

FURTHER INFORMATION

The following leaflet has more information about HIV:

<https://www.fpa.org.uk/sites/default/files/hiv-information-and-advice.pdf>

Our local Sexual Health Clinic is in Manchester City Centre, details can be found on the following website: <http://www.thenorthernsexualhealth.co.uk/>