

What happens when I go for an HIV test?

1. To know if you have HIV you need to get tested at a testing clinic

Are you having sex? Have you had sex before? If the answer is yes and you don't know if you have HIV, you need to get tested. You can get tested at clinics, hospitals, a private doctor and various organisations.



Kagiso (37)

“ Sometimes they say they’ve been bewitched. I tell people – go and get tested before you get sick. ”

2. Before you take the test, you will be asked if you want pre-test counselling

This means that someone who is trained as a counsellor will help you think about why you want to be tested and what could happen if you are HIV positive.



Anonymous

“ The counsellor helped me. He explained what would happen. And he explained that whatever the result, there were things I could do to stay healthy and live well. ”

3. A health worker will prick your finger with a needle and put a drop of blood onto the test kit

You will receive your results in 10 - 15 minutes.



Kagiso (37)

“ Sometimes they say they’ve been bewitched. I tell people – go and get tested before you get sick. ”

4. If the test is negative it means you do not have HIV

You will be offered post-test counselling to make sure you understand how to prevent HIV in the future.



Anonymous

“ Since I had my test, I make sure I stay negative. And I managed to get my partner to agree to be tested too. ”

5. If the test is positive, you'll be tested again

You will be offered post-test counselling to help you live as an HIV positive person.



Thabisa (34)

“ When the doctor told me I was HIV positive I could not hear a word of other things he was saying. Later I found information. I read a lot. That helped me understand the disease. ”

6. If you are HIV positive, the clinic will give you support and put you on treatment at the right time

Remember it is possible to live a healthy life with HIV but it cannot be cured. When the time is right, it can be treated. If you do not get treated, you will die.



Anonymous

“ I was upset when I discovered that I was HIV positive. But I am glad I know my status. Now I can do things to stay strong. ”