

Prevention Resources

Abstaining from oral, vaginal, and anal sex is the best method of protecting against HIV infection. Avoid IV drug use, sharing IV drug paraphernalia, or using unsterile needles.

Screening is recommended for individuals who have engaged in risky behavior (unprotected oral, vaginal, anal sex) or a change in sex partners.

Using Condoms! Both the male and female condom reduce the risks of STI transmission when they are used consistently and correctly. Dental dams reduce the risks of STIs for people practicing cunnilingus.

OTHER TIPS:

Communicate honestly with your partner about your sexual history and the number of current partners that you may have. Do not forget to communicate about STI screening, contraception and the use of condoms. Communicating about sexual issues does not come easily for many people. Acknowledging your discomfort about the topic can serve as a good way to initiate a conversation with your partner.

Remember that many people infected with STIs are unaware of their infection because of the absence of symptoms. As a result, the disease can be spread unintentionally and unknowingly.

Alcohol and other drugs should be avoided because they lower a person's inhibitions and ability to make self-protecting decisions.

Monogamous relationships involve both partners agreeing to be sexually faithful to each other and sticking to it. Partners should avoid sexual intimacy until they have both undergone screening for pre-existing STIs.

ECU Student Health
see numbers listed on back panel

**Pitt County AIDS Service
Organization (PICASO) 830-1660**

Pitt County Health Department
201 Government Cir., Greenville, NC
413-1300 (main number)
413-1449 (appointments)

Real Crisis Center
758-HELP (4357)

National AIDS Hotline
1-800-342-AIDS (2437)
TTD/TTY: 1-800-243-7889
Spanish: 1-800-344-SIDA (7432)

Pitt Co. Memorial Hospital (PCMH)
Social Work Case Mgmt.: 816-8411

HIV Support Group
Call 816-3702 for information.

Friends for Life
P.O. Box 26284
Raleigh, NC 27611
(919) 478-4089 or (919) 832-3232

ECU Campus Ministries
758-2030

To Contact Us

General Information(252) 328-6841
Appointments.....(252) 328-6841
Immunizations.....(252) 328-6841
Health Education(252) 328-6794
Pharmacy(252) 328-6793
Fax (252) 328-4007 or 4397

gotquestions@mail.ecu.edu

Hours of Operation

Fall and Spring
(Effective mid August 2001)

8:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m., Monday - Thursday
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Friday
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., Saturday & Sunday, Urgent Care

Fall and Spring Pharmacy Hours
8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Monday - Thursday
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Friday

Summer
(Mid May - Mid August)
7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday - Thursday
7:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., Friday

After hours emergencies dial 911

Student Health Service
East Carolina University
Greenville, NC 27858-4353

Division of Student Life

HIV & Testing

What is HIV?

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is the virus known to cause AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). HIV is a virus that attacks the body's immune system, impairing its ability to fight infections and disease. People often confuse the terms HIV infection and AIDS. HIV infection describes the full spectrum of infection — from no symptoms, to mild symptoms, to the later stages of HIV infection which is termed AIDS. Typically, during the later stages of HIV infection or AIDS, the body's immune system is severely compromised. Diseases that may afflict AIDS patients include Kaposi's sarcoma (a rare form of cancer), pneumonia, skin infections, meningitis, yeast infections in the throat, and infections of the lungs, intestine, and central nervous system.

It is generally estimated that 1 in 250 people are HIV positive in the college age population having a ratio of 1 in 500 students as HIV positive. It is important to note that people who are infected with HIV and are not aware of their HIV status, or do not meet the Center for Disease Control's current definition of AIDS, are not included in this total. **Although statistics are constantly changing**, women are the fastest growing groups becoming HIV positive. In North Carolina, women constitute about 15% of AIDS cases, with 41% of these women contracting the virus through heterosexual contact, compared to about 35% attributed to intravenous drug use. Close to 70% of AIDS cases seen in North Carolina fall between the ages of 20-39. For the most up-to-date statistics, call the National AIDS Hotline at 1-800-342-AIDS.

What is the HIV antibody test?

The test for AIDS that you have heard so much about is actually a test for HIV antibodies. This test can help you find out if you have been infected with HIV, and it determines if you have antibodies to the virus.

Antibodies are made by the body's defense system when it is infected with a virus or bacteria. If someone has HIV antibodies, it means that the person has been infected with HIV. People infected with HIV may or may not get AIDS, but once infected, they stay infected for the rest of their lives.

Who should be tested?

You should consider being tested if you have:

- ♦ engaged in unprotected vaginal, anal or oral sex.
- ♦ shared drug needles, syringes, or works.
- ♦ been infected with a sexually transmitted disease.
- ♦ ever been sexually assaulted.
- ♦ received a blood transfusion between 1978 and 1984 or if you have had unprotected sex or shared IV drugs (including the use of steroids) with someone who had a blood transfusion during this time.

Where can I be tested?

ECU Student Health Service and any health department in North Carolina offers the blood test that tells if a person has been infected with HIV. Testing is free and confidential, and staff at SHS have been trained to give you the information and counseling. They are also trained in interpreting the test results.

Before Your SHS Appointment

The Student Health Service can usually schedule an appointment for you within one week, and in many cases, the next day. Call 328-6841 to make an appointment. Indicate to the appointment secretary that you need an appointment for an HIV antibody test. The appointment secretary will ask you for your name, address, and social security number. You will go to the Student Health Center, just as you would for any type of appointment.

On the Appointment Day

When you arrive at the Student Health Center on the day of your test, you can expect to talk to a health care provider for approximately twenty minutes. Feel free to ask the health care provider any questions you may have. Any question or concern you have is worth asking. After you speak with the health care provider, a tube of blood will be drawn in the lab.

Before you leave, you will schedule an appointment to be informed of your test results. The results will be available in approximately two weeks.

After the Test

In the two weeks time that you must wait for the test results, you may feel anxious, depressed or scared. This is normal. You are encouraged to contact people who can be supportive to you during this time. You may consider bringing someone you trust with you to receive your results.

Two weeks after having your blood drawn, you must return **in person** at your pre-scheduled appointment to receive your test results. Results can not be given over the phone. The staff at Student Health are trained to give you the most accurate information available concerning a positive or negative test result.

What does a negative test result mean?

A negative test result means that HIV antibodies were not found in your blood at the time of the test. This means that you are either not infected with HIV or that you are infected but your body has not produced HIV antibodies. There is a window period where it can take up to six months after infection for antibodies to show up on a test. Depending on your particular situation, you may be recommended to test again. **It is important to realize that a negative test result does not mean you cannot contract HIV in the future.** The staff at Student Health will review how you can prevent HIV infection.

Sources

Crooks & Baur (1993). *Our Sexuality*, 5th edition.
North Carolina AIDS Training Network, Training Packet. Cary, North Carolina (1996).
Wistreich, G. (1992). *The Sexuality Transmitted Diseases: A Current Approach*.