

DRIED BLOOD SPOT HIV TEST INFORMATION SHEET

WHAT IS A 'SELF-SAMPLING' DRIED BLOOD SPOT (DBS) HIV TEST?

The DBS 'self-sampling' HIV test is when you take a sample of blood yourself. The blood sample is sent to a laboratory and a DBS HIV test is done to see if the blood has HIV.

The DBS HIV test is not a 'self-test'. A 'self-test' is when you perform the HIV test on the blood yourself instead of sending it to the laboratory.

HOW DOES THE DBS HIV TEST WORK AND HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO GET THE RESULT?

The DBS HIV test works by testing a small drop of blood from your finger that has been spread on a test card and left to dry. The card is then sent by you to a laboratory where it is tested to see if the blood has HIV.

The DBS HIV test is free and a kit can be ordered online and sent to you in the mail.

The DBS HIV testing kit has an instruction sheet, a blotting card, a device to prick your finger, a band-aid and a pre-paid envelope for you to post the dried blood sample to the laboratory.

The laboratory will do the DBS HIV test on the test card you send back via the post.

Results will be given to you in a week.

WHO CAN HAVE A SELF-SAMPLING DBS HIV TEST?

DBS HIV tests are offered to people aged over 16 years living in NSW and are:

- a gay man or man who has sex with other men, or
- a person from Africa or Asia, or
- a person who has a current or previous sexual partner/s from Africa or Asia.

If you do not fall into one of these groups you cannot have a DBS HIV test, but you can have a standard HIV test done by a doctor. To find out where to have a HIV test call the NSW Sexual Health Infolink (SHIL) on 1800 451 624.

HOW DO I ORDER A SELF-SAMPLING DBS TEST KIT?

To order a free DBS HIV test kit visit the DBS website (www.HIVtest.health.nsw.gov.au) and follow the instructions.

You will need to answer some questions, including some personal questions, to make sure you can have the DBS HIV test. Your personal information will be kept confidential.

HOW MUCH DOES THE DBS KIT COST?

The DBS HIV test is free for people participating in the program.

CAN I GIVE MY DBS KIT TO SOMEONE ELSE?

No. The DBS HIV test can only be used by you.

HOW DO I GET THE RESULTS OF MY DBS HIV TEST?

A sexual health nurse from SHIL will contact you with your results.

One of the following results will be given to you:

Negative - no HIV infection. You will get your results either by SMS, email or a phone call.

Detected - possible HIV infection. You will get an SMS or email asking you to call the nurse on 1800 451 624. The nurse will talk to you about having a standard HIV test done by a doctor.

Invalid - the test did not work. You will get an SMS or email asking you to call the nurse on 1800 451 624. The nurse will talk to you about having another DBS HIV test or a standard HIV test done by a doctor.

WHAT HAPPENS IF HIV SHOWS IN MY DBS TEST RESULT?

If the DBS test shows HIV in your sample, you will need to have a standard HIV test to confirm HIV infection. The nurse will call you and tell you where you can go for a standard HIV test. The nurse will also contact you within 7 days to ask if you need any more assistance.

HOW ACCURATE IS DBS HIV TEST?

Overall, DBS HIV tests are very accurate.

If a person becomes infected with HIV, the DBS test may not detect HIV until 12 weeks after the person has the infection. This is called the 'window period', causing a false negative result.

A very small number of tests can also give a 'false positive result'. This means the test result is positive even if a person does not have HIV infection.

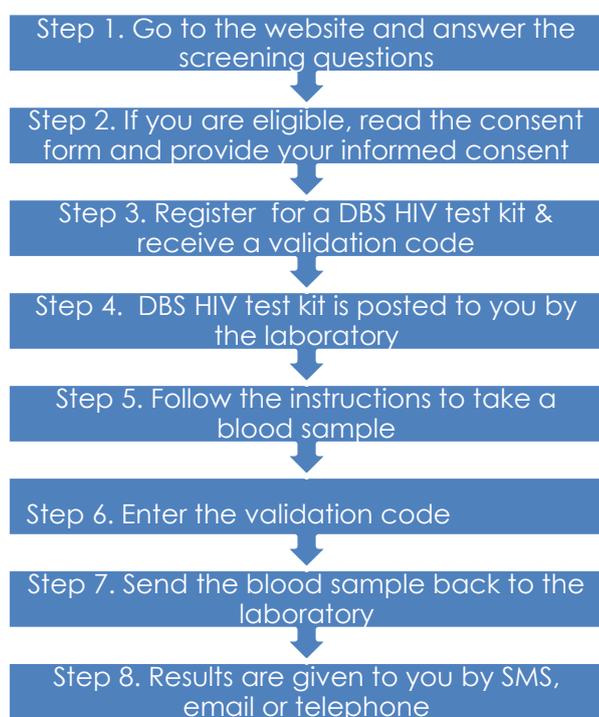
WILL MY INFORMATION BE KEPT PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL?

Your result will only be given to you.

The DBS HIV test is new in NSW. By doing the test, you are agreeing to your information, confidential test results and any follow-up information being collected.

Your information will be given to health workers involved in your care.

Your information, without your personal details, will also be used to assess if the DBS HIV testing program should continue. Your information will be reported in a way that ensures you cannot be identified.



WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE HIV?

If you think you have HIV or if you are experiencing flu-like symptoms (including fever, rash, headache, loss of appetite, muscle aches and swollen glands), please call the SHIL nurse on 1800 451 624 or speak to your doctor. It may be better to have a standard HIV blood test instead of the DBS HIV test.

If you have had unprotected sex within the last 3 days and are worried HIV has been passed on to you, please call the SHIL nurse on 1800 451 624.

They may advise you to see a doctor for Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP). PEP is one month of treatment to reduce the chance of getting HIV infection. PEP only works if taken within 72 hours (3 days).

WHAT COULD HAPPEN IF I DO NOT HAVE A TEST FOR HIV?

You could have HIV and not know. Knowing if you have HIV is important for your own health and wellbeing and for preventing HIV from being passed on to other people.

STAYING SAFE

You can protect yourself and others from HIV by always using a condom if you have anal or vaginal sex. Condoms protect you and your partners against HIV, and other sexually transmissible infections (STIs).

If you are worried you may have HIV or other STIs talk to your doctor or talk to a sexual health nurse on 1800 451 624 for more information.

IS THIS INFORMATION SHEET AVAILABLE IN LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH?

This information sheet is available in a number of languages, including Chinese (Traditional), Indonesian, Khmer, Thai, Vietnamese, Arabic, Portuguese, French and Spanish. Information sheets in these languages are available at the DBS HIV website.

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

Visit the DBS HIV testing website (www.HIVtest.health.nsw.gov.au) or call the NSW Sexual Health Infolink on 1800 451 624.