

# Rapid HIV Testing

For Dental Clinics



DOES HIV LOOK LIKE ME?  
INTERNATIONAL

Vancouver  
**Coastal Health**  
*Promoting wellness. Ensuring care.*

# Rapid HIV Testing for Dental Clinics

*A rapid HIV test has been approved for use in Canada. This newly available finger-stick test provides preliminary results in less than 60 seconds.*

## What is the expected benefit from the rapid test?

Quicker diagnoses and improved access to HIV prevention and treatment. Traditional lab tests can take about two weeks and two visits to provide results. The rapid test can now be done in one visit.

Health Canada estimates that 1 in 4 people living with HIV in Canada do not know their HIV status. HIV testing provides an opportunity for people to access life saving treatment and learn prevention strategies for themselves and their partners.

The dental clinic provides the perfect opportunity for patients, who may not be in regular contact with physicians, to be tested regularly, on an annual basis, should they wish.

## What is the test detecting?

The rapid test is not testing for the virus—it only tests for HIV antibodies. HIV antibodies may not appear for up to 3 months after infection with the virus. A very recent infection *may not* produce enough antibodies to be detected by this test.

## Who is involved in giving the test?

Dentists, dental hygienists and certified dental assistants can administer the tests. Rapid HIV testing, like standard lab testing, is confidential, must only be given with consent and accompanied by the opportunity to ask questions.

## How long does it take?

The entire test process, including informed consent and recording the patients information, takes approximately 10 minutes, possibly longer depending on the patient and the outcome of the test.

The results take only 60 seconds to appear.



## What is required to do the test?

A drop of blood from a finger-stick is required for the rapid HIV test, similar to how diabetics monitor their blood sugar levels. Results using this type of test can be negative or preliminary positive and may sometimes be invalid or indeterminate.

Any result that is not negative (i.e. invalid, indeterminate or preliminary positive) will require a traditional confirmatory blood draw test.

## What is informed consent?

Informed consent provides the client with the necessary information to make a voluntary decision about having an HIV test. It can take place in the form of a written pamphlet and a discussion between the tester and the patient.

*It is important for the tester to communicate the following to the patient:*

- This test is voluntary and confidential.
- It is a finger-stick test, and you will have the results in 60 seconds.
- If you are concerned about an incident within the last 3 months, it may not be detected today.
- This is only a screening test so any preliminary positives require a blood draw to confirm.
- HIV is a reportable infection. Newly diagnosed persons will be contacted by a public health nurse who will offer them health care and support right away, as well as offer their partners testing and support.
- You have the choice of using your name or only your initials on the test form. If the patient does not wish to use their full name, they can use a non-nominal identifier for reporting along with their birthdate. For example, John A. Smith, would be J.A.S (becomes first name) John (becomes the last name).

# Offering the Test

## Who do I offer the test to?

To *everyone* presenting to regular, emergency dental, or hygiene care who has ever been sexually active and who has not had an HIV test in the previous year.

## How do I offer the test to my patients?

There are many ways to offer the test, it is best to find one that is most suited to you and your clinic. Here are some suggestions:

- “I recommend an HIV screening test for *all* my patients, whether or not they think they are at risk, would you like one today?”
- “We are offering a 60 second HIV screening test to *all* of our clients, would you be interested in having one?”

## What if they ask why?

Remind them that an HIV test is something you do as part of routine health care, and that they are not being singled out.

- “The only way to know your status is to get tested. HIV positive individuals may not show symptoms for many years, but can still unknowingly infect others.”
- “HIV treatment prolongs and improves people’s lives. You don’t know if you need treatment unless you get the test.”
- “HIV treatment significantly reduces transmission. People on treatment for HIV can have healthy lives, relationships and children.”

All tests must be recorded on the log provided by VCH, regardless of the result. These test logs will be collected monthly.



## What happens if the test result is negative?

The test is accurate, and the provider can offer further information to the patient if they feel necessary or if the patient asks questions. Remember to inform the patient that the test will not detect a new infection (in the last three months). No further follow up is needed.

## What happens if the test result is invalid, indeterminate or preliminary positive?

An invalid, indeterminate or preliminary positive result at a dental clinic will require a follow up traditional confirmatory blood draw test.

The test does not provide confirmatory results, rather it is used as a screening tool to look for antibodies. Inform the patient that “a preliminary positive result is a *maybe* positive and requires a blood test to confirm. There can be a chance of a false positive result.”

If indeterminate or invalid, inform that patient that, “this is an unknown result. There could be an error with the test kit. You will need to get a blood test.” An invalid result is often because of user error. If the tester wishes to perform another test for an invalid result, they may do so at their own discretion.

The patient should then be advised of the mechanisms of HIV transmission: using protection and or avoiding sexual encounters and sharing needles until confirmation of test results.

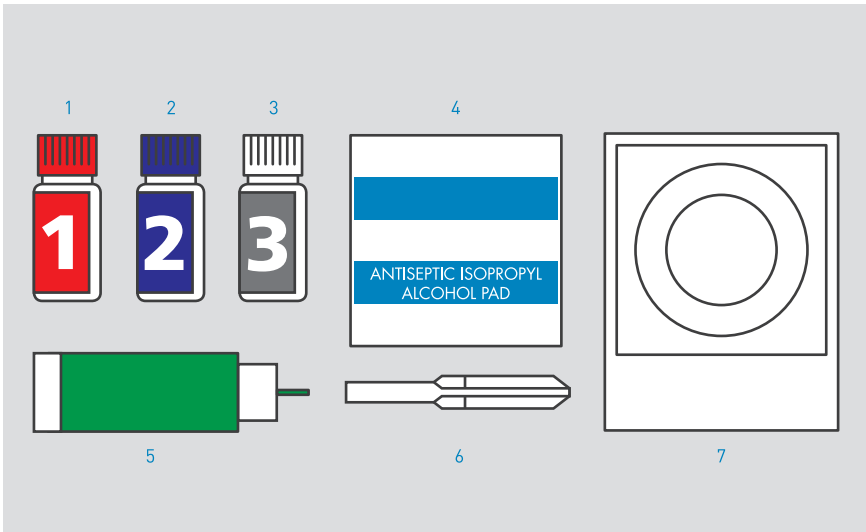
The tester will then write a confirmatory lab test requisition for the patient, which will be provided by Vancouver Coastal Health. The tester should then offer to connect the client with a health care provider and public health support.

As with other communicable diseases in British Columbia, a preliminary positive result *must* be reported to the Medical Health Officer.

## How do I report a preliminary positive?

Simply call the STOP HIV Outreach Team at 604.838.1331. No other follow up is necessary.

# The Contents of the INSTI Test Package



- 1 Bottle #1: Sample Diluent
- 2 Bottle #2: Colour Developer
- 3 Bottle #3: Clarifying Solution
- 4 Alcohol Pad
- 5 Lancet
- 6 Pipette
- 7 Membrane Unit

The lot number and expiration date for the kits can be found on the outside of the box of each kit.



# The Test Procedure

## Preparing to Administer the Test

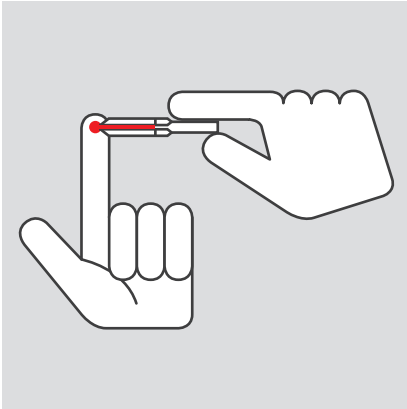
- 1 Be sure you have a clean workspace, with a proper container to dispose of the test kit items once it has been used.
- 2 Put on disposable gloves.
- 3 Place the membrane unit facing you, with the thicker tab on the bottom.
- 4 Locate **Solution 1**, twist off the red cap, and set the cap and open bottle in front of you.

## Collecting the Blood Sample

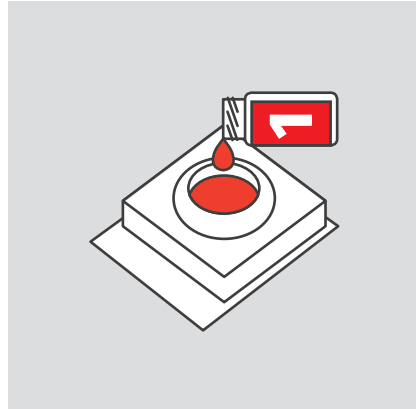
- 1 Choose a finger from the non-dominant hand, swipe the finger tip with the alcohol pad, wait for the alcohol to dry.
- 2 Twist and pull the green tip out of the white end of the lancet.
- 3 Milk the finger by rubbing blood towards the finger tip, and ensure the finger is below the heart.
- 4 Place the lancet on the outside of a finger tip, and press firmly into the finger tip until you hear a click to puncture the skin.
- 5 Hold the pipette horizontally to the finger tip, and squeeze the finger to create a solid bead of blood. Once a bubble of blood is produced, place the tip of the pipette onto the blood bubble; *do not squeeze it*. Pulse the finger tip to keep a solid bead of blood. If you don't get a solid bead, and/or blood spreads, wipe finger with a cotton swab and re-squeeze so you have a clean bead of blood. You will see that the blood flows into the pipette. Fill the pipette to the black line; capillary action will automatically draw the blood to the fill line (corresponding to 50µl). *Do not use blood from an open wound/extraction, or site/gum area, even if it is available.*

# The Test Procedure (continued)

## Administering the Test



- 1 Transfer the collected blood from the pipette into the red bottle marked **Solution 1**



- 2 Pour **Solution 1** into the membrane unit, allow it to absorb completely, then immediately proceed to step 3



- 3 Pour **Solution 2** into the membrane unit, allow it to absorb completely, then immediately proceed to step 4



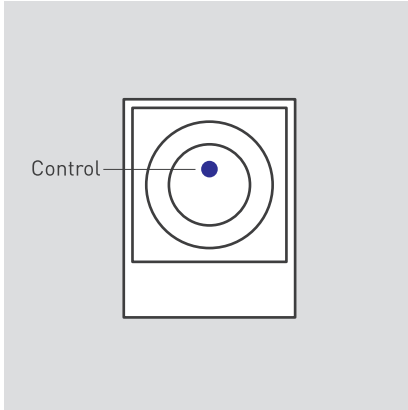
- 4 Pour **Solution 3** into the membrane unit, allow it to absorb completely



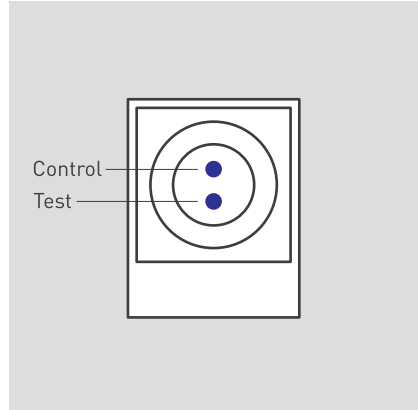


# Interpreting the Results

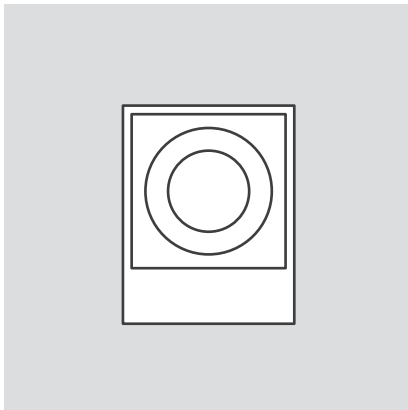
Results *must* be interpreted within five minutes of completing the procedure.



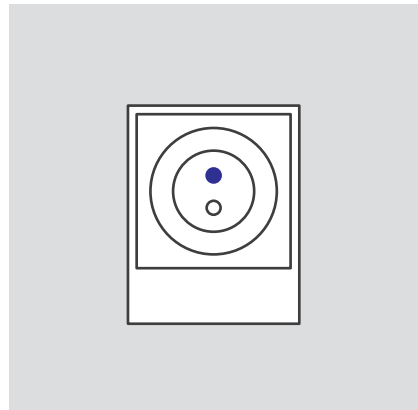
**Negative** (Non-Reactive)



**Preliminary Positive** (Reactive)  
*One spot may be darker than the other*



**Invalid**  
*A missing control spot is what makes a test invalid, even if you see a test spot it is still invalid*



**Indeterminate**  
*The test spot has an outer ring circle only*

# The Test Work Flow

## START

### Informed Consent

- Has the patient voluntarily consented to be tested?

YES →

- Collect info for log and reporting to public health
- Plan for contingency of preliminary positive
- Discuss referral for a confirmatory lab test
- Discuss referral to public health supports
- Perform Insti Test



- Is the test result invalid or indeterminate?

NO →

- Encourage the person to return for a test at a better time

**END**



YES →

- Write a lab requisition to confirm result, using the same identifiers as the log
- Offer to connect client to a public health nurse and social support
- Preliminary positives are reportable to VCH CDC, the dental clinic *must* call the STOP HIV Outreach Team at 604.838.1331

↑  
YES  
↓

NO →

- Is the test result a preliminary positive?

→ NO →

- No further follow-up is needed

**END**

**STOP HIV Outreach Team**

604.838.1331

[www.stophivaids.ca](http://www.stophivaids.ca)

**Does HIV Look Like Me? International**

1.800.601.0191

[www.doeshivlooklikeme.org](http://www.doeshivlooklikeme.org)

**AIDS Vancouver**

Main telephone: 604.893.2201

Helpline: 604.696.4666

[www.aidsvancouver.org](http://www.aidsvancouver.org)

DOES HIV LOOK LIKE ME?

I N T E R N A T I O N A L