

## HIV Recent Diagnosis

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### Description:

Recently you had an HIV test and in a follow-up consultation with your doctor it was confirmed that the result was positive. This means that at some point in time you have been infected with HIV. Having HIV does not mean you have AIDS.

### Practical Advice

What is HIV?

AIDS. Once HIV enters the body it attacks the immune system, breaking down its ability to fight disease and infections. If left untreated, HIV will lead to AIDS, which stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. AIDS develops when the immune system can no longer function to fight disease or infection.

Treatment

HIV used to be considered a death sentence, but it can now be treated and people can live with the infection and remain well for many decades. There is now a range of drugs available that can control the virus and limit the amount of damage it can do to your immune system.

How is HIV spread?

HIV can be spread through unsafe sex, through the sharing of needles and other drug injecting equipment, and through other blood-to-blood contact. It can also be transmitted from mother to baby. It is important to use condoms during sex, to avoid sharing drug-injecting equipment and to prevent any blood-to-blood contact. HIV cannot be transmitted by casual contact such as by sharing eating utensils or by touching someone.

Caring for your health

You will need a good GP to help you to care for your health. Your GP may refer you to another doctor or clinic for management of your HIV. You will need regular blood tests to discover how your body is coping with HIV and whether you should be started on treatment. The aim of this treatment is to reduce your viral load (the amount of HIV in your body) and to allow your immune system to repair any damage that has occurred (by increasing your CD4 cell count).

Confidentiality

Your HIV test result is private and personal. You do not have an immediate obligation to tell anyone, although you should consider informing your sexual partner or partners. Only in exceptional circumstances is it lawful for doctors, nurses or health care providers to tell anyone that you are HIV positive without your consent. However, HIV is a notifiable disease, which means that the laboratory has already informed Queensland Health of your positive result. Queensland Health may assist your doctor to discreetly trace people who may have infected you, or whom you may have infected, in order to help them and to reduce spread of the infection.

### Other Resources

- [Queensland Health Sexual Health Website](#)
- [Queensland Positive People website](#)
- [Queensland Association of Healthy Communities website](#)

### Related Content

[HIV and AIDS fact sheet](#)

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Safe Sex fact sheet