Why is it important

To test for HIV?

Testing for HIV might seem scary before you've done it, but it's pretty quick and easy to do. Plus, it has real benefits for you and those around you. Whatever the result, it will allow you to know your HIV status.

But…Why would you want to know your HIV status?

Knowing your status means you can do something with the information. Knowing whether you are negative or positive can help you to make the best decisions for your future.

You might be afraid to be tested for HIV because you are scared that you might be HIV-positive. Not knowing your status might feel easier and less painful.

If you know you are **HIV-negative**, it can motivate you to be safe and keep up healthy behaviours. It's still important to continue protecting yourself to remain negative at your next test!

Knowing that you are **HIV-positive** allows you to start treatment, look after your health, and understand what is happening to your body. This can make it much easier for you to live a long healthy life. On the other hand, being HIV-positive and not knowing you are positive could put you at risk because you may not monitor your health properly, or not take medications that will reduce the HI virus in your body. Plus, you could be putting others in your life at risk – you could infect them without knowing it.

In the long run, though, knowing your status gives you a lot more power to take care of yourself, and it means you have less to be scared of. Being HIV-positive does not change who you are – HIV is something that many people live with. But if you want to live well with it, you need to know your status!

Testing for HIV is a cool thing to do! To find your nearest clinic for an HIV test, go to https://bwisehealth.com/clinic/search/

> **"Knowing your status means you can do something with the information."**

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