

Taking the HIV test? / produced by Camden & Islington Gay Men's Team ; illustration by Mark Blann.

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TAKING THE HIV TEST



WHAT?

The HIV antibody test — commonly known as the **HIV TEST** — is a simple blood test which will tell you whether or not you have been infected with HIV. The test detects the presence in your blood of **ANTIBODIES** to the virus.

ALL ABOUT HIV⁺

Antibodies are special proteins which float in your bloodstream, fighting disease. They are produced naturally, by your body's immune system, whenever you are infected with any disease-causing organism, such as a virus or a bacterium. Antibodies are specifically tailored to fight a particular infection. So HIV antibodies will only be produced if HIV enters your body. In other words, if the HIV test discovers HIV antibodies in your blood, that means you have been infected with the virus — you are HIV-positive. If the test does not detect any HIV antibodies, then you haven't been infected with the virus — you are HIV-negative.



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www.metromate.org.uk  MetroM8

This is one of a series of six postcards adapted from an exhibition entitled ALL ABOUT HIV⁺, which was produced by Camden & Islington Gay Men's Team. For more details phone 020 7530 3911

The illustration overleaf, by Mark Blann, shows the (blue-and-purple) Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) being attacked by antibodies (the Y-shaped objects).