

HIV can be treated : take control- take the test / King's College Hospital.

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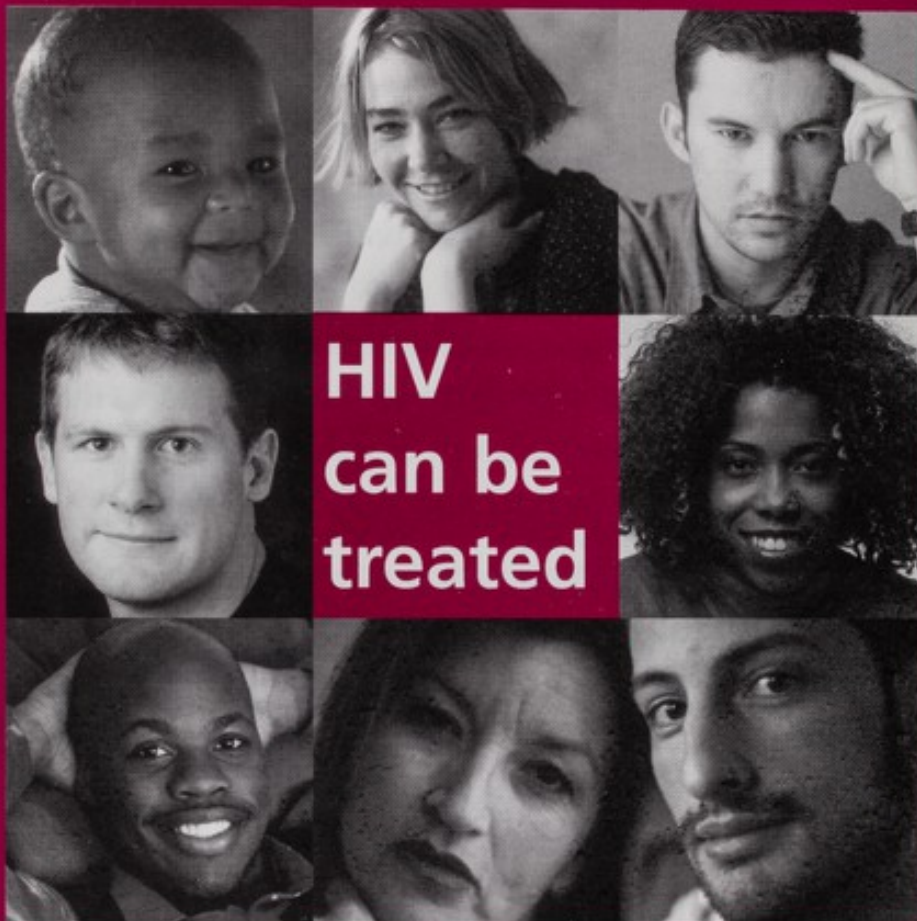
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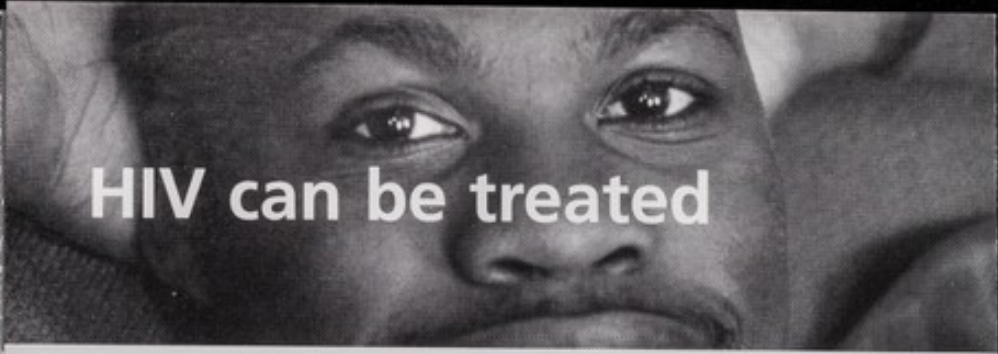


**HIV
can be
treated**

Take control - take the test

10,000 people in the UK do not know
that they have HIV

10,000 people are not getting the
help they need



HIV can be treated

Take control - take the test

Finding out if you have HIV could save your life. Many people with HIV are now living full and active lives, thanks to effective medical treatment. If you are tested and discover that you have HIV, you can get a combination of drugs that will help to control the infection and keep you healthy.

HIV tests and medical care are free, confidential and available to everyone. Even if you are unsure about having a test, you can speak to a doctor or health adviser if you think you may be at risk of having HIV. They'll be able to answer your questions and give you confidential advice.

HIV/AIDS has not gone away. Although there is still no cure, HIV can be controlled by life-long medical treatment.

"I've been taking my tablets for HIV for about five years and I feel great. There's so much support available."



Free, confidential support and treatment

What are the benefits of knowing if I have HIV?

If your test shows that you are HIV positive (that you are infected with HIV) you will be able to get free medical care and support to help you deal with the infection. Treatment works best when it is given early, before the infection has damaged the body's immune system.

I feel fine, why should I have an HIV test?

You can have HIV but still look and feel well for many years. During this time you can pass on the infection to others. The only way to find out if you are infected is to be tested.

Where can I get advice and information?

There are many support groups and clinics throughout London where you can be tested and treated. For more information call:

National AIDS Helpline: 0800 567 123

or

African HIV/AIDS

Information Helpline: 0800 096 7500

If you are concerned about going to a clinic near where you live, don't worry. You can get tested and treated at any specialist clinic in London.

Are the services available to everyone?

Yes. Everyone can get the full range of tests, advice and medical services. And it's all completely free and confidential.

"We were worried about the test but it's better to know if you've got HIV. Our treatment has given us hope and kept our kids healthy."



Available to everyone

What will the test involve?

If you have an HIV test, the doctor or health adviser at the clinic will discuss your concerns and explain what will happen to you. A nurse will take a sample of blood for testing. You will then be given another appointment for about one week later when you will be given the results of your test. The results are never given over the phone or in writing. Everyone who has a test needs to come back for this second appointment - regardless of the results.

If you need an interpreter, please phone the clinic before you arrive and they will arrange this for you.

Will you tell anyone else about my case?

No. By law, your medical records are strictly confidential. No information will be shared with anyone else, unless you give permission for this.

If the test shows that I have HIV what will happen next?

The doctor or health adviser will tell you the results of your test at your follow-up appointment. If the test shows that you have HIV, you will be given an appointment with a specialist doctor as soon as possible - usually within a few weeks. At this visit, you will have plenty of time to ask questions and discuss your concerns. The doctor will tell you if you need treatment yet, and what treatments are available.

"I'm glad I had the test and know what's wrong. Now I can get the right treatment."



What is HIV/AIDS?

What is HIV?

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus that attacks the body's immune system. When your immune system is damaged, you cannot fight off infections and can develop serious illnesses (AIDS - Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome). If HIV is treated early enough, many of these illnesses can be prevented.

How is HIV passed on?

HIV is passed from one person to another through body fluids. The most common ways that HIV is passed on are:

- by having sex
- from HIV-infected women to babies before or during birth, or through breast-feeding
- by sharing needles or injection equipment.

Can HIV be prevented?

Yes. Don't put yourself at risk. Use a condom and avoid unsafe, unprotected sex and don't share hypodermic needles.

Can HIV/AIDS be cured?

No, not yet - but life-long medical treatment can prevent many of the illnesses caused by HIV, and enable people to live full and active lives.

6/02



Did you know that...

- Effective medical treatment is available for HIV
- Deaths from AIDS fell by two-thirds since this treatment became available
- You can have HIV but still look and feel well for many years. You can pass on the infection to others during this time
- The only way to find out if you are HIV positive is to have an HIV test
- Testing, treatment and support is free, confidential and available to everyone
- About 30,000 people in the UK have HIV - but 10,000 of them don't know they are infected
- One out of four people are diagnosed too late to benefit fully from treatment

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