



UNITAID-PSI  
HIV SELF-TESTING AFRICA

### Why should I know my HIV status now?

It is very likely that you test HIV negative. Regular testing is necessary to protect your health and the health of your family. Today the advancements in HIV treatment options have been significant and many people living with HIV live long and normal lives with early detection and proper care. The earlier you know your status, the earlier you get started on treatment, the better your chances of leading a normal, fulfilling life.

*Do not use the kit if you are HIV positive and on HIV treatment (ARVs) because you may get a false negative result*



**Call TOLL-FREE  
NUMBER \*\* \*\*\* \*\***  
**for support**

# HIV SELF TESTING

*Do you want to test yourself?*



**Get a demonstration video app on your cellphone. At any time before, during or after taking the test, you can call the free help hotline on 08 \*\*\* to speak to a counsellor.**

## What is HIV self-testing?

HIV self-testing is when instead of having a nurse or healthcare worker performing the test with you, you can conduct the HIV test yourself, on your own, in privacy and at your convenience, alone or with your partner. With HIV self-testing you are performing the test and you are reading the result yourself.

## Why do I need to know my status?

Knowing your status is important to your health, the health of your loved ones and for your peace of mind.

Even if you are in a monogamous relationship (both you and your partner are having sex only with each other), it is important to know your own and your partner's HIV status, as you could have been infected before you entered your current relationship. That is why it is recommended that everyone gets tested for HIV. Getting to know your HIV status, whatever the outcome enables you to continue living a normal and healthy life.

## Why should I use an HIV self-test kit?

You can do the test on your own, in the privacy of your home and in your own time. If you need help with the test you can ask your community based distributor or community healthcare worker to assist you. The community health care worker will walk you through the different steps, demonstrate how to use the test and might show you a video. At any time before, during or after taking the test, you can call the **free help hotline** on **08 \*\*\* \*\*** to speak to a counsellor, who can provide additional assistance to any questions you might have.

## How reliable are the test results?

You must follow the test directions carefully to get an accurate result. The test kit contains everything you need to complete the test. If you need further assistance you can ask your community distributor or community health care worker for assistance, you can also receive a demonstration video on your cell phone, or you can call the toll-free hotline.

When used correctly an HIV self-test provides an accurate result that is comparable to other HIV rapid tests used by health care workers for HIV testing. If the self-test that you used shows a positive result, a health care provider has to confirm your test results, either at a health care facility or at a New Start Centre or by a New Start outreach team. Confirming your results will enable you to speak to a counsellor about managing your status so that you can continue to live a fulfilling life.

## How can I do a self-test?

Anyone can perform the self-test; you do not need to be a nurse or health care worker. You will be shown how to use the test kit and written instructions are available on the leaflet inside the test kit package. You just have to follow the instructions step by step as indicated.

The HIV tests in this program can detect HIV antibodies in oral fluids, therefore you do not have to do a finger prick, but can just swipe the test strip against your gums in your mouth.

**Do not use this HIV self-test if you are HIV positive and on anti-retroviral therapy (ARVs) because you may get a false negative result.**

## How do I perform the self-test?

- The community distributor or community health care worker who gave you the test will show you how to use it.
- The test kit comes with detailed instructions to show you every step of the process.
- You can also ask for assistance, or get an instruction video from the community based agent distributing kits in your area, or call the hotline number on **08 \*\*\* \*\*** if you need help on how to use the kit.
- Do not eat/drink/use oral cleaning products or brush your teeth for at least 30 minutes before doing the test.
- Find a quiet, well-lit place where you can be for at least 20 minutes.
- Always use the directions to help read your results correctly.
- If you use glasses to read, you will need them for taking the test.
- Make sure you have a timer, watch or something that can time 20 minutes to 40 minutes.

## How do I get support after self-testing?

New Start mobile teams operating in your community will continue to be available to help you with a variety of health services that you might want to use after self-testing. New Start provide a variety of services such as general health check for men and women, including BP check, body weight measuring and screening for STIs. New Start provides family planning and other women health services such as screening for cervical cancer and voluntary medical male circumcision (VMMC) services for men.



In addition, New Start provides confirmative testing in case you get a positive result using the self-test. Other services include counselling, CD4 cell count testing, TB screening, assistance for referral for treatment and other support that you may require confidentially and anonymously. The community health care worker will hand out a leaflet featuring all the health services provided by the New Start team visiting your community. You will receive a New Start appointment voucher from the community health care worker or distributor who handed you the HIV self-test kit. Present the voucher to the New Start team that visits your community.



Alternatively, visit your nearest clinic and tell them you have self-tested and take the used HIV self-test with you.

Place your used HIV self-test in a sealed envelope and place it in the collection box at the New Start team or with the community distributor/health care worker.