Facts about HIV during pregnancy

- HIV is the human immunodeficiency virus, the virus that causes AIDS.

- HIV is passed through shared bodily fluids, such as blood or semen.

- HIV can be spread through unprotected sex, injection-drug use, or from a mother to her baby during pregnancy, delivery, or through breastfeeding.

- If you get treatment for HIV while you are pregnant, there is almost no chance you will give HIV to your baby.

  The chances of your baby getting HIV are:

  - Lowest (*2% chance*) if you start treatment during pregnancy.
  - Lower *(10% chance)* if you start treatment during labor
  -Highest (*26% chance*) if you do not get treatment

- If you have HIV, your partner(s) should get tested to get the services he needs.

- If you need help talking to your partner, you can speak with your healthcare provider, or contact Partner Services at 800-358-9001, for free confidential help.

Do you need more information about HIV and AIDS?

Contact the Infectious Disease and Environmental Health Administration, MDHMH
at 410-767-5227 or 1-800-358-9001
Or visit their website:
http://eh.dhmh.md.gov/ideah/

OR

Call the CDC National AIDS Hotline:

1-800-342-AIDS (in English)

Center for a HealthyMaryland

an affiliate of **MedChi**
The Maryland State Medical Society

1211 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-5516
410.539.0872 / 800.492.1056
www.healthymaryland.org

STATE OF MARYLAND
DHMH
Maryland Department of
Health and Mental Hygiene

What you should know about

HIV Testing During Pregnancy

*Taking care of **yourself** means...*
*Taking care of **your baby***

Why should I get tested?

- An HIV test is a part of **routine prenatal care.**

- HIV can be spread through unprotected sex, **so if you are pregnant you may be at risk for having HIV.**

- A mother can pass HIV to her baby during pregnancy, during delivery, or through breastfeeding.

- The sooner a mother finds out if she has HIV, the sooner she can start treatment to protect her baby.

If I find out I have HIV, what can be done for my baby?

- If you find out that you are HIV positive and get treatment while you are pregnant, there is almost no chance you will give HIV to your baby.

What do I need to know before being tested?

- Your provider will offer an HIV test with other routine prenatal tests when you start your prenatal care.

- An HIV test can **save your baby's life.**

- If you ask not to be tested, both you and your baby will continue to receive routine care. However, if you are HIV positive and your doctor and your baby's doctor do not know you have HIV, it increases the chances of your baby getting HIV.

- HIV tests results are **confidential.** Only you and your healthcare providers will know the results.

How is the HIV test done?

- Usually blood is drawn for the HIV test. It is done at the same time as other prenatal blood tests.

- A mouth swab may be done to test for HIV if other blood tests are not being done.

- It can take a few weeks to get the results.

- You may need to have another HIV test during your 3rd trimester if you are at risk for getting HIV.

What do my test results mean?

If your test comes back negative…

- No further testing is needed at this time.

- It most likely means that you do not have HIV, but the test may not show newly acquired infection.

- If you think you are at risk for HIV, talk to your healthcare provider about when you should be tested again.

**An indeterminate test result means that the test was neither negative nor positive and further testing will need to be done.

If your test comes back positive…

- Your baby may have been exposed to HIV.

- Your healthcare provider will talk to you about getting medicine to help prevent passing HIV to your baby during labor and delivery.

- Your healthcare provider will discuss treatment options and other services available for you and your baby.

- A positive HIV test result means that a person is infected with HIV, but **does not** mean a diagnosis of AIDS. Other tests will be needed to diagnose AIDS.