HIV Antibody Test Information Form for Insurance Applicant

AIDS

Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a life-threatening disorder of the immune system, caused by a virus, HIV. The virus is transmitted by sexual contact with an infected person, from an infected mother to her newborn infant, or by exposure to infected blood (as in needle sharing during IV drug use). Persons at high risk of contracting AIDS include males who have had sexual contact with another man, intravenous drug users, hemophiliacs, and sexual contacts with any of these persons. AIDS does not typically develop until a person has been infected with HIV for several years. A person may remain free of symptoms for years after becoming infected. Infected persons have a 25 percent to 50 percent chance of developing AIDS over the next 10 years.

What are the Symptoms? Most people infected with the AIDS virus have no symptoms and feel well. Some develop symptoms that may include:

- Fever, including "night sweats"
- Weight loss for no known reason
- Swollen lymph glands in the neck, underarm, or groin area
- Fatigue or tiredness
- White spots or unusual blemishes in the mouth
- Diarrhea
- Fever, including "night sweats"
- Fatigue or tiredness
- White spots or unusual blemishes in the mouth

These symptoms are also symptoms of many other illnesses. They may be symptoms of AIDS only if they are not explained by other illness. Anyone with these symptoms for more than two weeks should see a doctor.

The HIV antibody test:

Before consenting to testing, please read the following important information:

1. a) "ELISA" test means an enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay serologic test which has been licensed by the federal Food and Drug Administration to detect antibodies to the human immunodeficiency virus.
   b) "Positive ELISA test" means an ELISA test performed in accordance with the manufacturer’s specifications which is reactive on an initial testing and on at least one of two additional tests of the same serum or plasma specimen.
   c) "Western Blot Assay" means an assay which uses reagents consisting of HIV antigens separated by polyacrylamidegel electrophoresis and then transferred to nitro-cellulose paper to detect antibodies to the human immunodeficiency virus.
   d) "Reactive Western Blot Assay" means an Assay which is reactive according to the standards of performance and results specified in the manufacturer’s federal Food and Drug Administration approved product circular for the Western Blot Assay reagents and laboratory apparatus.
   e) "HIV antibody test" means an ELISA test or a Western Blot Assay, or both.

2. Purpose. This test is being run to determine whether you may have been infected with HIV. If you are infected, you are probably not insurable. This test is not a test for AIDS; AIDS can only be diagnosed by medical evaluation.

3. Positive test results. If you test positive, you should seek medical follow-up with your personal physician. If your test is positive, you may be infected with HIV.

4. Accuracy. An HIV test will be considered positive only after confirmation by a laboratory procedure that the state health officer has determined to be highly accurate. Nonetheless, the HIV antibody test is not 100 percent accurate. Possible errors include:
   a) False positives: The test gives a positive result, even though you are not infected. This happens only rarely and is more common in persons who have not engaged in high-risk behavior. Retesting should be done to help confirm the validity of a positive test.
   b) False negatives: The test gives a negative result, even though you are infected with HIV. This happens most commonly in recently infected persons; it takes at least 4 to 12 weeks for a positive test result to develop after a person is infected.

5. Side effects. A positive test result may cause you significant anxiety. A positive test may result in uninsurability for life, health, or disability insurance policies you may apply for in the future. Although prohibited by law, discrimination in housing, employment, or public accommodations may result if your test results were to become known to others. A negative result may create a false sense of security.

6. Disclosure of results. A positive test result will be disclosed to you. You may choose to have information about your HIV test results communicated to you through your physician, the State Health Department, or through a local community-based organization.

7. Confidentiality. Like all medical information, HIV test results are confidential. An insurer, insurance agent, or insurance support organization is required to maintain the confidentiality of HIV test results. However, certain disclosures of your test results may occur, including those authorized by consent forms that you may have signed as part of your overall application. Your test results may be provided to the Medical Information Bureau, a national insurance data bank. Your insurance agent will provide you with additional written information about this subject at your request.

8. Prevention. Persons who have a history of high-risk behavior should change these behaviors to prevent getting or giving AIDS, regardless of whether they are tested. Specific important changes in behavior include safe sex practices (including condom use for sexual contact with someone other than a long-term monogamous partner) and not sharing needles.
Notice and Consent for Blood and Body Fluid Testing

To evaluate your insurability, we have requested that you provide samples of your blood and/or other body fluids for testing and analysis. Depending on your age, your medical history and the amount or the type of insurance applied for, you may be asked to provide a sample of blood and/or other body fluids, such as urine and saliva for testing and analysis. All tests will be performed by a licensed laboratory. You may have ten (10) days to decide whether you wish to sign this form. You may refuse to be tested. However, such refusal may be used by the insurer as reason to deny coverage.

The tests to be performed will include a determination of the presence of antibodies or antigens to the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), also known as the AIDS virus. The HIV test performed is actually a series of tests designed to determine the presence of these antibodies or antigens. If you have been infected with the HIV virus which causes AIDS, your body may have produced HIV antibodies which try to get rid of the infection.

Instead of providing a blood sample for initial testing purposes, you may be requested to first provide only a sample of your body fluids (e.g. urine or saliva) for testing. This sample of other body fluids will be tested for evidence of HIV antibodies, kidney disorders, diabetes, and foreign substances such as nicotine and cocaine. If this HIV test is abnormal (positive) or other abnormalities are ascertained, you then will be requested to provide a blood sample for full blood series testing including a confirmatory HIV blood test. Other blood tests which may be performed include determinations of blood cholesterol and related lipids (fats), and screening for diabetes, liver and kidney disorders.

**Testing Considerations:** Many public health organizations have recommended that before taking an HIV related test, a person seek counseling to become informed concerning the implications of such test. You may wish to consider counseling, at your expense, prior to being tested. Free confidential counseling is available in most Arizona communities. If you need information about the availability of counseling in your area contact your county health department or: Phoenix Metropolitan Area: 253-2437 (Arizona AIDS Information Line)
Outside the Phoenix Area: 1-800-334-1540 (Arizona Department of Health Services)

**Meaning of a Positive Test Result:** The HIV test is extremely reliable. In very rare instances, however, the test result may be abnormal (positive) in persons who are not infected with the virus. Additionally, the test result may occasionally be normal (negative) in persons who are infected with HIV, especially when the infection occurred within the previous 3 - 6 months.

While abnormal HIV test results do not mean that you have AIDS, they do mean that you are at significantly increased risk of developing AIDS or AIDS-related conditions and you may wish to consider further independent testing. Federal authorities say that persons who are HIV positive should be considered infected with the AIDS virus and capable of infecting others. An abnormal (positive) HIV blood test result or other significant blood or body fluid abnormalities will adversely affect your application for insurance. This means that your application may be declined, that an increased premium may be charged, or that other policy changes may be necessary.

**Disclosure of Test Results:** All test results will be treated confidentially. The results of the test will be reported by the laboratory to us. The test results may be disclosed to employees of the IOF who have the responsibility to make underwriting decisions on behalf of us or to outside legal counsel who need such information to effectively represent us with regard to your application for insurance. The results also may be reported to our affiliates or reinsurers in connection with insurance you have applied for. In addition, if you are refused insurance because your HIV blood test is abnormal (positive), a generic code signifying non-specific blood abnormality will be reported to the Medical Information Bureau, Inc. ("MIB") as described in the notice given to you at the time of application. More specific non-HIV reports may be made to MIB in connection with testing. Test results will not otherwise be disclosed except as required by law or as authorized by you. You have the right to request the names of those specific individuals or organizations.

**Notification of Test Results:** If your HIV test results are normal, no notification will be sent to you. If your HIV tests are abnormal, we will contact you, your legal guardian, or the person authorized by you below. In the absence of such designation - the State Department of Health will be sent the results. Other abnormal test results which, in our opinion, are potentially significant to your health or insurability will be similarly communicated.

If you wish to preauthorize another person for notification of abnormal test results, please provide the name and address below. We encourage you to authorize a physician for the purpose of discussing test results.

**Informed Consent:** I have read and I understand this NOTICE AND CONSENT FOR BLOOD AND BODY FLUID TESTING. I voluntarily consent to the withdrawal of blood from me by needle, the testing of that blood and body fluid as described above, and the disclosure of the test results as described above. I have read the information on this form about what a test result means and understand that I should contact a local AIDS service group or my physician or health care provider for further information and counseling if the HIV test result is abnormal. I have been given a copy of the state Hotline phone numbers and addresses (if available). I understand that I have the right to request and receive a copy of this authorization. A photocopy of this form will be valid as the original. I understand that the provisions of this consent form shall be effective for a period not to exceed 180 days from the date this form was signed by me or my legal representative.

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**Name of Proposed Insured**  
**Signature of Proposed Insured (Parent/Guardian)**  
**State of Residency**  
**Date Signed by Proposed Insured (Parent/Guardian)**

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**OPTIONAL RELEASE OF INFORMATION TO PERSONAL PHYSICIAN**

In addition to the release of information as described above, I hereby authorize the release of my HIV test results to my personal physician named below:

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**Physician’s Name**  
**Address**  
**Signature of Proposed Insured (Parent/Guardian)**  
**Date Signed by Proposed Insured (Parent/Guardian)**