

Youth Voices

"Go for it; it might save your life and other's too."

"Now I have a girlfriend that I've been going out with for over a year, and every – once a year, I go and I get tested ... I just get everything done and out of the way just to keep on top of what's going on with myself."

"I had slept with some people I probably shouldn't have, and it was unprotected, so I'd get really scared, and I'd go get it tested ... because the lifestyle I had was not very safe."

"It kind of made me nervous that we had unprotected sex, so I had an HIV test done."

"I wanted to be able to have sex with my new boyfriend, so I had a test done to make sure that things were fine, so that we would be fine."

"Let them know they don't have to be scared."

"Ah what the heck, I should just go get tested."

Where do I go for information or a test?

Provincial HIV/AIDS Hotlines

British Columbia: 1-800-661-4337

Saskatchewan: 1-800-667-6876

Ontario - English: 1-800-668-2437

Quebec: 1-877-776-2727

Nova Scotia: 1-800-566-2437

Newfoundland & Labrador: 1-800-563-1575

Northwest Territories: 1-800-661-0844

Eastern Arctic: 1-800-661-0795

Alberta: 1-800-772-2437

Manitoba: 1-800-782-2437

Ontario - Francais: 1-800-267-7432

New Brunswick: 1-800-561-4009

Prince Edward Island: 1-800-314-2437

Yukon: 1-800-661-0408 ext 8323

Nunavut: 1-800-661-0795

Local Resources



**The Diagnosis and Care of HIV Infection
in Canadian Aboriginal Youth Project**

This pamphlet is based on findings from a national research project entitled "The Diagnosis and Care of HIV Infection in Canadian Aboriginal Youth" funded through a grant from the Canadian Institutes for Health Research. The research team included researchers from the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN), the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Universities of Alberta, Calgary, and Toronto. Verbatim quotes used in the pamphlet are from study participants, following removal of identifying information. The complete report is available through CAAN at www.caan.ca. Graphic designer of pamphlet: Lee Miller. Logo: Sonia Isaac-Mann.

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HIV
"Just go get tested"



Aboriginal youth across the country talked about HIV testing

Aboriginal youth from across Canada participated in a study about HIV testing – 413 completed a survey and 28 were interviewed. Most of them lived in cities and half had tested for HIV. Nearly all of the youth in the study were HIV negative. A few were positive.

This is what they said:

Deciding to get an HIV test

“Yeah, because, I don’t know, it just didn’t seem like it could happen to me, you know. But I guess it can happen to anybody.”

The reasons that Aboriginal youth went for an HIV test were:

- They had sex without a condom
- The female youth were pregnant or thought they were pregnant
- They thought that they might have come in contact with the HIV virus

The reasons that Aboriginal youth did **not** go for an HIV test were:

- They did not believe that they had sex with an infected person
- They were afraid they would test positive
- They did not think that they had come in contact with the HIV virus

“[I’ve] been thinking about it for awhile, and I was kind of, like, maybe I should go, because, like, it’s a duty to myself ... if I do have it, I have to take certain measures to take care of myself.”

Having an HIV test

“[My] friend said, I’ll come with you to the doctor’s for the first visit, if that’s what you’d like. [So] he came with me [and we] handled it.”

- HIV test results are confidential and at some testing centres you don’t have to give your name
- Testing can be done anywhere you feel comfortable, including inside or outside your community
- HIV testing can be part of a regular health checkup or a visit to a drop in clinic
- When you go for a test, you can find out how to stay healthy and decrease your HIV risk
- You can expect that you will be treated with kindness, respect and understanding

“They were very nice, very, very calm ... just the atmosphere, I guess, they just – the way they were, it put me at ease, I guess. But I was very uneasy to begin with, going to get an HIV test.”

After the HIV test

“Don’t be scared – it’s part of life and you’ll feel o.k. after it’s done with.”

- When you get your results, you have the right to talk to someone
- You may talk with a health care provider, an Elder or someone else that you trust
- If you are positive, you can find out about treatment and different ways to get the care you need

“After [they told me I was positive] there was a bunch of counsellors that came to see me to help me deal with it.”