

HIV & Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

KNOW THE FACTS, GET TESTED



HOW ARE HIV AND IPV RELATED?

- According to recent studies, one in three women experiences intimate partner violence (IPV). For women with HIV, it is one in two.
- 33% of female veterans report experiencing intimate partner violence in their lifetime.
- Women in relationships with violence have 4x the risk for contracting STIs, including HIV. Fear of violence can influence whether some women get tested for HIV.
- Men, as well as women, can experience IPV.
- A history of victimization is a significant risk factor for unprotected sex for HIV-positive women and men.

WHY SHOULD I GET AN HIV TEST?

Almost 1 in 7 people with HIV don't know they're infected.

- **Know Your Status:** A person with HIV could show no symptoms for years, but could still pass the virus on to others. An HIV test is the only way to be certain about your HIV status.
- **Get Care:** Like many other diseases, it is better to diagnose and treat HIV early rather than late.
- **Stay in Care:** There have been many advances in the treatment of HIV. As a result, people with HIV often live much longer and healthier lives than before.

★ TAKE THE TEST, TAKE CONTROL

Even if you do not think you are at risk, talk to your provider about taking the HIV test. It can save your life.

Learn more: www.hiv.va.gov

WHAT DOES THE TEST INVOLVE?

- HIV testing within VA is voluntary and confidential. It is easy to get tested, just ask your VA provider for the test at your next visit.
- If you give your consent to be tested, an HIV test will be done with either a sample of blood or fluid (saliva) from inside your mouth. For the blood test, blood is drawn either from an arm or from a finger with a needlestick. For the oral-fluid test, a swab is used to brush the inside of your mouth.
- Traditional blood test results are available in 1-2 weeks. Some facilities offer rapid tests that provide preliminary results in around 20 minutes. However, all positive results with the rapid test will require confirmation with a blood test.

WILL AN HIV TEST AFFECT MY VA BENEFITS?

- Your HIV test result will not affect your VA care or your eligibility for VA benefits.
- You have the right to refuse HIV testing without losing medical benefits or any right to care.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE FOR IPV?

Women's Health

Call 855-VA-WOMEN

Visit womenshealth.va.gov

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800.799.7233

Mental Health

Call 800-273-8255

Visit ptsd.va.gov

CONNECT WITH US:

 SUBSCRIBE TO RECEIVE EMAIL UPDATES AT WWW.PATIENTCARE.VA.GOV

 [FACEBOOK.COM/VETERANSHEALTH](https://www.facebook.com/veteranshealth)

 [TWITTER.COM/VETERANSHEALTH](https://twitter.com/veteranshealth)