

## Who should get an HIV test?

- › Public health experts recommend that **all** adults get tested for HIV as part of their routine medical care.
- › Everyone—not just people who think they are at risk—should be tested.

## Why should I get an HIV test?

- › An HIV test is the only way to be certain about your HIV status.
- › A person with HIV could show no symptoms for years, but could still pass the virus on to others.
- › Like many other diseases, it is better to diagnose and treat HIV early rather than late.
- › 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.
- › The earlier HIV is detected, the sooner a person can receive excellent care provided by VA and begin taking steps to remain healthy for years to come.

## What does the test involve?

- › HIV testing within VA is voluntary and confidential. It is up to you to decide whether you want to be tested.
- › Before deciding, you will be given educational materials on HIV and HIV testing. VA also encourages you to ask your provider any questions you may have.
- › 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.



## TAKE THE TEST, TAKE CONTROL

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

