



Fact Sheet for Physicians

Routine Screening for HIV in Pregnancy

ALL pregnant women in Alberta are to be screened for HIV along with the other routine screening tests.

A WOMAN CAN DECLINE TESTING

Explain the test for HIV (See Pre-Test Checklist)

Fill out the Provincial Lab *Prenatal Testing – Initial Screen for Pregnant Women* Requisition.
Provide *Pregnant? Information on Routine Tests for Infections* pamphlet.

Woman decides to take test

Woman declines HIV test
Place an X on the lab form beside
"Patient declined HIV testing."

Positive Result

Within seven to fourteen days, the lab will phone you directly with the results.
Provide *Quick Facts for Pregnant Women with HIV* pamphlet.

Negative Result

Will be forwarded to you within two weeks.
Discuss risk factors, protection and window period.

Counsel the Pregnant Woman
See Post-Test Checklist.

Contact the HIV Specialist

For information and support on case management

Calgary:

- Southern Alberta HIV Clinic (403 234-2399)

Edmonton:

- University of Alberta Hospital (780 492-8822
- Infectious Disease specialist on call)
- Royal Alexandra Hospital (780 735-4111
- Infectious Disease specialist on call)
- Capital Health STD Centre (780 413-5156)
- Dr. B. Romanowski (780 436-4900)

The Medical Officer of Health will contact you for options on contact tracing and community supports.

Patient seen for the FIRST TIME AT DELIVERY WITH NO PRENATAL CARE

Provide woman with information on test.
Contact the Virologist on call for Provincial Lab in either Edmonton (780 407-7121) or Calgary (403 944-1200) to arrange STAT HIV testing.

Quick Counselling Tips for Physicians on Routine Screening for HIV and Pregnancy

Pre-test Checklist

- Inform the woman that HIV testing is recommended as a routine part of prenatal care because of the immense benefit to both the mother and the child in managing and preventing HIV infection.
- The woman has the right to decline testing for HIV.
- Provide ***Pregnant? Information on Routine Tests for Infections*** pamphlet.

Post-test Checklist – Negative HIV Test

- Inform patient of result.
- This is an opportunity to explore any risk factors for HIV and ways of reducing them.
- Discuss repeating HIV test later in pregnancy if there is a possibility that the first test was done in the window period (the period of about four to six weeks before HIV antibodies can be detected by routine screening tests).

Post-test Checklist – Positive HIV Test

POSITIVE HIV TEST RESULTS MUST BE DISCUSSED IN PERSON IN ALL BUT EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

Contact an Infectious Disease specialist for advice and in most cases, to arrange early referral.

- Explain the alternatives regarding the pregnancy: continue or terminate the pregnancy.
- Emphasize the importance of medical care.
- Arrange referral to an Infectious Disease/HIV specialist.
- Provide copy of ***Quick Facts for Pregnant Women with HIV*** pamphlet.

ANSWERS TO COMMON CONCERNS BY HIV POSITIVE PREGNANT WOMEN

Am I going to die?	Many people with HIV continue to enjoy a healthy life for many years. There are continuing developments in treatment.
What about my baby?	Provide information contained in the <i>Quick Facts for Pregnant Women with HIV</i> pamphlet.
Who can I talk to?	It is important to talk to someone you can trust such as your partner, close friend or clergy. Some women find it helpful to talk to other women who are HIV positive. (Refer to the <i>Quick Facts for Pregnant Women with HIV</i> pamphlet for resource phone numbers.)
Who will know?	Your doctor and the Medical Officer of Health are given the test result.
What about my safety?	With some women the disclosure of a positive result could put her at risk for abuse. Tell me what the reaction might be in telling your partner. Do you need some help in finding a safe place to stay?

Resources

- ***Pregnant? Information on Routine Tests for Infections*** pamphlet
- ***Information for Health Professionals on HIV in Pregnancy*** pamphlet
- ***Quick Facts for Pregnant Women with HIV*** pamphlet

Available on the following websites www.health.gov.ab.ca www.albertadoctors.org