

Routine HIV testing: Part of preventive care at Kaiser Permanente

During your appointment today, we will ask you if you've ever been tested for HIV. The nation's leading health experts agree that HIV testing is important for everyone aged 15 through 64 years regardless of risk.

Getting tested is an important tool to let people know if they're infected with HIV

HIV is a serious health problem that affects more than a million people in the United States. Since it can take up to 10 years for symptoms of the virus to show up, people can be infected with HIV and not even know it.

In Washington State, there are about 14,000 people living with HIV. Many of these people don't know they are infected. When people don't know they're infected, there's a greater chance that they will pass the virus on to others without knowing it.

Early testing can lead to earlier treatment

Left untreated, HIV infection can cause serious health problems. Almost all patients with untreated HIV infection eventually develop AIDS. Early diagnosis allows people to begin a treatment plan to help them stay healthier and delay or prevent complications caused by AIDS.

Antiretroviral therapy (ART) is an effective treatment that can help people with HIV live longer, healthier lives and lower the chance of passing the disease to others. The sooner treatment is started, the more effective it is in preventing complications caused by the virus.

HIV testing is an important part of your preventive care

To make sure our patients receive the very best care, we offer all patients aged 15 through 64 a one-time HIV test as part of their preventive care benefit.

Talk with your provider about whether you need to be tested for HIV more often than this.