

# Uni-Gold™ Recombigen® HIV-1/2

Subject Information Leaflet

Pour d'autres langues  
Für andere Sprachen  
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Information you should know about HIV and Uni-Gold™ Recombigen® HIV-1/2 antibody test prior to being tested.

It is very important to read this Information Leaflet before you get tested for HIV. It will provide you answers to the following questions:

- What is HIV and AIDS?
- How can I become infected with HIV?
- How can I avoid becoming infected with HIV?
- Why should I have a HIV test?
- What is Uni-Gold™ Recombigen® HIV-1/2 and how does it work?
- What does my test result mean?
- Where can I get more information about HIV and AIDS?

## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE YOU GET TESTED FOR HIV?

Read this leaflet carefully. If you have any further questions, or do not understand something, make sure that you ask your healthcare provider to explain it to you. They are the best person to answer any questions you might have about HIV, AIDS, Uni-Gold™ Recombigen® HIV-1/2 and all testing options that are available to you.

You have a choice of the type of test to use. Once you decide what type of test you want an appropriate sample will be taken and tested for the presence of HIV antibodies. If HIV antibodies are found in your body you have been infected with HIV; the virus that causes AIDS.

## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT HIV AND AIDS?

HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. HIV causes AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome). Many people are infected with HIV and do not have any sign of illness for many months or years. When a person becomes infected with HIV, it begins to attack his or her immune system, which is the body's defence against illness. As a result, that person becomes ill more and more often. When his or her body loses the ability to fight diseases, that person is said to have AIDS. People with AIDS become very sick with serious illnesses and cancers, and often will die from these illnesses.

## HOW YOU CAN BECOME INFECTED WITH HIV?

You can become infected with HIV through contact with blood, semen, vaginal fluids, or breast milk of an infected person. Contact includes unsafe sex, sharing used needles and syringes. Infected women can pass the virus to their babies during pregnancy, childbirth, and breast feeding. It is also possible to become infected with HIV through a blood transfusion, although this is now very rare.

People do not become infected with HIV through everyday casual contact with people at school, work, home, or anywhere else. The virus is not spread from contact with sweat, tears, saliva, or a casual kiss from an infected person (deep, or "French" kissing is not advised). Nor can people become infected from contact with forks, cups, clothes, phones, toilet seats, or other things used by someone who is infected with HIV. People do not become infected from eating food prepared by an HIV-infected person. People have not become infected with HIV through insect bites.

## HOW YOU CAN AVOID BECOMING INFECTED WITH HIV?

The best way to avoid getting HIV is to avoid activities that would increase your risk of allowing the virus to be passed to you. You can reduce the risk of becoming infected with HIV by the following:

The only way to avoid sexual exposure to HIV is to have sex with an uninfected partner or to abstain.

- If you are not certain that your sex partner is uninfected, you should use a latex condom correctly every time you have sex.
- Do not share needles or syringes.

## WHY YOU SHOULD GET A HIV TEST?

It can take many years for the HIV virus to make someone ill. A person can have HIV for 10 years or more before developing AIDS. You may have been infected with HIV and not know it and the only way to be confident that you are not infected with HIV is to get a HIV test. It is important to take a test and find out if you are infected with HIV so that you can take the steps to avoid infecting others and so that you can receive medical care. Although there is presently no cure for AIDS, there are new treatments and medications for HIV infection that can help you live a longer and healthier life.

## WHAT IS UNI-GOLD™ RECOMBIGNEN® HIV-1/2 AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

Uni-Gold™ Recombigen® HIV-1/2 is a rapid test for detecting antibodies to HIV and will provide you with very fast results in 10 minutes. This ability to give you a result very quickly can be important in certain circumstances such as the emergency room. There are other testing options available when speed is not an issue; however, these tests usually provide you with a result in 1-2 weeks.

The Uni-Gold™ Recombigen® HIV-1/2 antibody test is a fast and accurate test that provides an easy-to-read test result in 10 minutes. Uni-Gold™ Recombigen® HIV-1/2 antibody test is used to see if there are antibodies to HIV in a sample of your blood.

## WHAT DOES MY TEST RESULTS MEAN?

A **preliminary positive** result suggests that antibodies to HIV may be present in your blood. If you receive a **preliminary positive** result on the test, the result must be confirmed by another test. It is also advised that you take precautions to avoid any chance of spreading HIV until your test result is confirmed.

If you are found to be infected, you may benefit from special medical care. See a doctor because under their supervision and with new treatments you can stay healthy, even though you are infected with HIV. Other tests can tell you how strong your immune system is and what treatments might be best for you. Some people stay healthy for a long time with HIV. Others may become ill more rapidly. Be careful not to pass HIV on to others. You must take steps to protect others by practicing safe sex and by informing your past and present partners about your HIV test result.

A **negative test** result means that HIV antibodies were not detected in your blood at the time of testing. However, this does not completely rule out the possibility of being infected with HIV. If, in the last 3 months, you have had any of the contacts described in the "How you can become infected with HIV" section above, there is a possibility that you may still be infected with HIV. HIV antibodies may not appear until a few months after infection with HIV. A recent infection may not produce enough antibodies to be detected by this test. Ask your healthcare provider if you should consider getting tested again in the next 3 to 6 months to be sure that you are not infected. However, if you are certain that you have not had any of these contacts that could pass on HIV to you in the 3 months before you have this HIV test, a Negative test result means that you were not infected with HIV at the time of the test. You should always ask your healthcare provider if you are not sure about what your test result means.

- **Where you can get more information about HIV and AIDS?**

If you have any questions or want additional information, ask your healthcare provider or contact your local health department.

You can call the National AIDS Hotline at 1-800-342-AIDS (1-800-342- 2437) where you can talk directly to a HIV specialist. These HIV specialists are available all day and all night to answer your questions at any time. Other AIDS service organizations near you can also provide information, education, and the help you may need.