

## HIV

HIV is the virus that can cause AIDS. It is possible to have HIV for years and not know it. If you have HIV it is possible to pass the virus to other people through blood and body fluids (such as vaginal secretions and sperm). You can also pass the virus on to your baby during pregnancy, childbirth or through breastfeeding. HIV is currently uncommon in New Zealand women. However numbers are increasing and it is therefore recommended that all pregnant women are offered an HIV test.

If you have HIV infection the chance of the baby becoming infected can be reduced from a up to 30% chance to a less than 1% chance by a combination of treatments. Currently this would include medication for mother and baby, in some cases caesarean section and a recommendation not to breastfeed.

If your HIV test is positive expert advice, help and support will be given to help you look after yourself, your baby, your sexual partner and your whanau. Your LMC will be your first point of contact, but you will also be referred for specialist consultant care.

Further information and assistance is available from:

### **Positive women Inc**

(A peer support service for women and families who are living with HIV)

09 309 1858 or [www.positivewomen.org.nz](http://www.positivewomen.org.nz)

### **New Zealand AIDS Foundation**

(Information, confidential counselling and research on HIV & AIDS)

0800 802437 (24 Hour toll free hotline) or

[www.nzaf.org.nz](http://www.nzaf.org.nz)

### **Counties Antenatal HIV screening coordinator**

Ph 276 0000 through the operator.

## Results

The health professional who organized your blood tests will let you know how you will get your results. This is usually at your next routine visit.

Very occasionally (1:1000), your blood test results will be uncertain i.e. neither positive nor negative. If this happens, you may need more blood tests to get a clearer result.

## Confidentiality

All test results are confidential. If you need any support, information or treatment you will be referred to the appropriate health professional. Confidentiality

All test results are confidential, only to be shared with you and your caregivers. Results will be phoned through to your caregiver from the lab.

Further information and assistance is available from:

## Your Pregnancy

### Blood tests to help protect you, baby, your whanau.

Having blood tests early on in your pregnancy can help protect you and those close to you. These tests are free.

It is best to have the tests as soon as you know you are pregnant. They are offered to all pregnant women including those who decide not to continue with the pregnancy.

This leaflet tells you about the tests that are offered

## Routine blood tests

Six different tests are currently offered. These are usually carried out at the same time so you only have one set of blood taken. These tests are:

- Blood group and rhesus factor
- Full blood count
- Rubella
- Syphilis
- Hepatitis B
- HIV

## Informed consent

It is important that you have enough information to make your own decision about your care, if you have any questions after reading this leaflet please ask your doctor or midwife. The decision to have these tests is yours and you may choose to have one or more of the tests." Your decision will not affect the quality of your care."

## Blood Group and Rhesus factor

Your blood type falls into one of 4 groups A, B, AB or O. You will also be Rhesus negative or positive. It is important to know this information in case you require a blood transfusion which is uncommon. If you have a rhesus negative blood type you may require an injection of anti-D following abdominal trauma or bleeding in pregnancy, miscarriage, termination or birth. This will prevent severe anaemia in any subsequent babies.

## Full blood count

When you are pregnant your body needs extra iron for the baby and if you are not able to get sufficient iron from your diet you may suffer from anaemia (low iron levels). Anaemia can make you feel tired and less able to cope with blood loss at the birth and caring for your new baby. Your LMC will give you information about increasing iron rich foods in your diet. If necessary your doctor or midwife may recommend a supplement.

## Rubella (German measles)

This test checks if you are immune to (protected against) rubella. If you are not immune, and you catch rubella in the early part of your pregnancy it can cause severe problems, such as deafness for your baby. If you are not immune you can receive a vaccination after you have given birth or are no longer pregnant.

## Syphilis

Syphilis is a rare infection in New Zealand, but if untreated it can cause very serious health problems. It can be transmitted sexually or from mother to child at birth. Most pregnant women with syphilis do not know that they have it as they have no symptoms and feel well. If you test positive for syphilis you can be treated with antibiotics which can prevent serious health problems for you, your baby and any future pregnancies.

## Hepatitis B

You need to know if you have Hepatitis B virus so that you can avoid passing it onto others, such as your baby, sexual partner or whanau. Hepatitis B is a virus that can cause inflammation and long term damage to the liver. Most infected people do not know that they have it as they have no symptoms and feel well. However they may pass the infection to other people by blood and body fluids such as sperm and vaginal secretions. If you have Hepatitis B those close to you can be given a vaccination to protect them from catching the virus from you. Your baby will receive hepatitis immunoglobulin and a course of vaccinations will commence within 24 hours of birth. These vaccinations will protect your baby from being infected by the virus.

Babies of Hepatitis B positive mothers are who are not vaccinated have a 90% chance of becoming carriers and a 30-50% chance of developing liver disease in later life.

For more information about Hepatitis B contact:

## The Hepatitis Foundation

0800 332 010

[www.hepfoundation.org.nz](http://www.hepfoundation.org.nz)