



HIV Testing

Today you were tested for HIV using a rapid antibody test. Your test result was **negative**. Although a negative HIV test result can alleviate anxiety, in many people it precipitates a mixture of emotions. This is normal and expected. At first, you may feel relief knowing that you are not infected. However it is not uncommon to experience mood swings in the days and weeks following a negative HIV test result. Concerns about past behavior that led to the testing, the potential of infecting a partner or significant other, and feelings of sadness or guilt may follow the news of a negative test result. You may also wonder whether you will be able to avoid risk behaviors in the future.

A wellness counselor can give you advice on strategies to avoid future infection and can help you deal with the feelings you are experiencing. For an appointment with a wellness counselor, contact the CUMC Center for Student Wellness at 212-304-5564 or studentwellness@columbia.edu.

It is recommended that you have additional HIV testing _____

For more information about HIV and HIV testing please visit the following websites:

www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/hiv aids/questions/index.htm

www.health.state.ny.us/health/hiv aids/questions/testing.htm

www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/aids/edpdfs/htm

Beevor AS, Catalan J. Women's experience of HIV testing: the views of HIV positive and HIV negative women. *AIDS Care: Psychological & Socio-Medical Aspects of AIDS/HIV*. 1993; 5(2): 177-86.

Clay D. Mental health and psychosocial issues in HIV care. *Lippincott's Primary Care Practice*. 2000 Jan-Feb; 4(1): 74-82.