

# Source patient testing

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## Information for patients

This leaflet can be made available in other formats including large print, CD and Braille and in languages other than English, upon request.

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This leaflet tells you about source patient testing.

## What is source patient testing?

Sometimes healthcare workers can be exposed to blood or other body fluids while caring for a patient, for example, by injury from a used needle or from a splash of blood or body fluids into their eye or mouth.

If this happens there is a risk of the healthcare worker catching any infections the patient may have. Sometimes the patient could have a serious infection which they or their doctors may not be aware of, for example, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). In these circumstances the healthcare worker may need treatment and it is important that this is started quickly.

## Why does this affect me?

A healthcare worker who has been looking after you has had an injury caused by a piece of equipment that has some of your blood or body fluid on it or was splashed by your blood.

**You were probably not aware that this had happened and it was not your fault.**

## How can I help?

Because you were the patient being cared for when the injury happened, you are known as the source patient. We will ask if a sample of your blood can be taken for testing.

## Would all patients be asked to have this test?

Whenever a patient is the known 'source' of such an injury, involving a healthcare worker, they will be asked to have this test. This standard procedure has been advised by the Department of Health.

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## What will the blood test involve?

A member of your medical team will ask for your written consent to take a sample of your blood. This will be tested in a laboratory to see if you have any blood-borne viruses, for example, either:

- Hepatitis B
  - Hepatitis C
- or
- HIV.

He or she will ask some questions about your health and lifestyle (like those asked at Blood Donation Centres). These give your doctor information about the chances that you may have one of these blood-borne viruses and help to decide if the healthcare worker needs immediate, urgent treatment.

## Can I refuse to have the blood test?

You can choose not to give consent for the blood test. Refusing to have the blood test will not affect your treatment or future care in any way.

## Will I get to know the results of the test?

Yes. One of your doctors will explain the result of your test.

## What happens if my blood test is positive?

If your blood test is positive for one or more of the viruses you will be offered advice and given support. You will then be referred to a specialist doctor who will discuss the best treatment for you.

The results of the test will be recorded in your healthcare record and also in the injured healthcare worker's occupational health notes. Your GP will be told your results (unless you ask for this not to happen).

## What happens if my blood test is negative?

If your blood test is negative the results of the test will be recorded in your own healthcare record and in the injured healthcare worker's occupational health notes. Your GP will be told your results (unless you ask for this not to happen).

## Will I have to tell insurance companies that I have had these tests?

No. Insurance companies should not ask if you have had an HIV or Hepatitis B or C test, had counselling in connection with such a test or received a negative test result. Doctors should not reveal this information when writing reports and insurance

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Ask one of your nurses or doctors if you want more information or if there is anything you are unsure about.

### Contact numbers

If you have any further questions or concerns, please ask your doctor or nurse, or you can contact a member of the hospital Infection Control Team:

#### Infection Prevention and Control Team

telephone: 01642 383280

Monday - Friday, 9.00am - 5.00pm

### Further information is available from:

#### Public Health England

<http://www.hpa.org.uk/Topics/InfectiousDiseases/ReferenceLibrary/BloodborneVirusesAndOccupationalExposureReferences/>

#### NHS Choices

telephone: 111 (when it is less urgent than 999)

Calls to this number are free from landlines and mobile phones or via the website at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

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This leaflet has been produced in partnership with patients and carers. All patient leaflets are regularly reviewed, and any suggestions you have as to how it may be improved are extremely valuable. Please write to the Quality Assurance Team, University Hospital of North Tees or email: [patientinformation@nth.nhs.uk](mailto:patientinformation@nth.nhs.uk)

### **Comments, Concerns, Compliments or Complaints**

We are continually trying to improve the services we provide.

We want to know what we're doing well or if there's anything which we can improve, that's why the Patient Experience Team is here to help.

Our Patient Experience Team is here to try to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible. If you would like to contact or request a copy of our PET leaflet, please contact:

telephone: 01642 624719  
Monday – Friday, 9.00 am – 4.00 pm  
Messages can be left on the answering machine and will be picked up throughout the day.

freephone: 0800 092 0084  
Mobile: (can use text): 0779 506 1883  
Email: [patientexperience@nth.nhs.uk](mailto:patientexperience@nth.nhs.uk)

Out of hours if you wish to speak to a senior member of Trust staff, please contact the hospital switchboard who will bleep the appropriate person.

telephone: 01642 617617  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The Patient Experience Team is available to discuss your concerns in person Monday – Friday, 1.30 pm – 4.30 pm. The office is based on the ground floor at the University Hospital of North Tees.

### **Data Protection and use of patient information**

The Trust has developed a Data Protection Policy in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. All of our staff respect this policy and confidentiality is adhered to at all times. If you require further information please contact the Information Governance Team.

telephone: 01642 833551 or email: [information.governance@nth.nhs.uk](mailto:information.governance@nth.nhs.uk)

University Hospital of North Tees, Hardwick, Stockton-on-Tees. TS19 8PE  
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Telephone: 01642 617617

Fax: 01642 624089