

Ressources that can help you or answer your questions

YOUR CLSC:

Your CLSC offers a variety of services. Feel free to call for a medical consultation or for psychosocial services.

When you call your CLSC, you also have access to the Info-Santé help line. Info-Santé CLSC provides information on a number of topics, including HIV/AIDS.

CENTRE MATERNEL ET INFANTILE SUR LE SIDA (CMIS) AT SAINTE-JUSTINE HOSPITAL:

CMIS in Montréal provides health monitoring and psychosocial support for both women, HIV-infected pregnant women and their children, as well as psychosocial support for their families.

For information on HIV testing and pregnancy:

(514) 345-4836

AIDS COMMUNITY AGENCIES:

A number of community agencies in Québec provide services to people living with HIV/AIDS.

COCQ-SIDA (Coalition des organismes communautaires québécois de lutte contre le SIDA) is a coalition of community agencies that you can contact for information on resources available in your area:

(514) 844-2477

GAP-VIES (Groupe d'action pour la prévention de la transmission du VIH et l'éradication du SIDA) is an agency that works with the Haitian community:

(514) 722-5655

CRISS (Centre de ressources et d'interventions en santé et sexualité) is devoted mainly to helping women through HIV prevention and providing support for women living with HIV/AIDS:

(514) 855-8991

FEEL FREE TO CONTACT THEM.

Ce dépliant est aussi disponible en français.

Santé
et Services sociaux
Québec 

*Having a baby
or thinking
about it...*

*What about
AIDS?*

Québec 

Pregnancy

Having a baby is an extraordinary adventure! Of course, you want to do everything you can to make sure your baby is born healthy. So, during the next few months, you'll want to take good care of yourself.

Whether you are already pregnant or just thinking about having a baby, did you know that testing for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, is now part of a complete prenatal follow up?



Why an HIV test?

Because if you are infected by HIV, medications can be administered first to the pregnant woman and then to her newborn during the first few weeks of life. These medications substantially reduce the risk of HIV transmission from mother to child.

If you want to have a baby, why not play it safe?

You can talk it over with your partner and decide to both take the test. A simple blood test will tell you whether you or your partner are infected by HIV. With the test results in hand, you'll be in a better position to make an informed decision about having a baby.

If you are pregnant

At one of your first visits to your doctor, he or she will suggest certain medical tests, including one for HIV, because this test is now part of a complete battery of prenatal tests.

If you don't want to take the test, tell your doctor.

In recent years, one of the most promising advances in AIDS prevention has been the significant reduction in the risk of mother-to-child HIV transmission.

If you are pregnant and infected by HIV, you'll be offered medication to reduce the risk of HIV transmission to your baby and, if necessary, your doctor may suggest a Caesarean birth.

How can I check whether my partner or I are infected by



The only way to know is to take the HIV test. **Why?** Because when the virus enters the bloodstream, the body reacts by producing antibodies. A simple blood sample is all that is needed to detect the presence of these antibodies and to determine whether or not the person has contracted the virus.

HIV test results

A NEGATIVE TEST RESULT CAN MEAN ONE OF TWO THINGS:

- ▶ **That you are not infected**
- ▶ **That the level of antibodies produced against the virus is too low to be detected by the test because the infection is too recent (less than 3 months).**

A negative result won't protect you against HIV during your pregnancy if you or your partner engage in risky activities with an HIV-infected person (having unprotected sex or sharing contaminated needles).

IF THE TEST RESULTS ARE POSITIVE

That means you are infected by HIV. If you are pregnant, HIV can be transmitted to your baby during pregnancy, delivery, or breastfeeding.

If you are infected, your doctor will explain your options in detail, i.e., terminating or continuing your pregnancy. Should you decide to terminate it, your doctor can refer you to the appropriate resource for an abortion.

If you decide to have the baby, you will be offered the option of taking HIV medication and possibly having a Caesarean to reduce the risk of transmitting HIV to your baby. Breastfeeding is not recommended because it increases the risk of transmitting HIV to the baby.

Feel free to ask your doctor any questions you have about your and your baby's health. Other professionals are also available to provide you with assistance and support.