

Mayo Clinic Minute: Know your status — the importance of HIV testing

Video	Audio
	"I want people to know that it's still prevalent in society."
	Dr. Stacey Rizza says HIV attacks and weakens the immune system. It destroys a type of white blood cell called CD4, which protects against infections. Dr. Rizza says most people in the early phase of the disease often don't know they have it.
Stacey Rizza, M.D. Infectious Diseases Mayo Clinic	"It can hide away in the body in a latent state for many, many, many years, and that's why it's so difficult to cure HIV."
	If you're HIV positive and unaware of your status, you can unknowingly transmit the virus to others through sexual contact or by sharing needles.
	"HIV prevention is using barrier protections, like condom or dental dams, or female condoms."
	Screening for HIV can help detect the virus early, and knowing your status enables you to prevent spreading it to others.
	"I would love for more of society to get tested for HIV and then connect those who are infected to care. So we can take care of them and give them long, long, healthy lives."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Sonya Goins.