

HIV Specimens

This information is provided as general guidelines pertaining to Wisconsin statutes and Meriter Corporate Policy. Further clarification can be obtained by contacting the Meriter Laboratories Client Services Department.

1. Patient/authorized representative must be provided with DHS fact sheet or verbal information that includes:
 - A. Explanation of HIV infection
 - B. Meaning of HIV test results
 - C. Notice that healthcare services won't be denied if test is declined
 - D. Notice that HIV-positive tests must be reported to public health
 - E. Treatment options and HIV-related services for people who test positive
2. Patient/authorized representative must be provided an opportunity to ask questions and to decline test. Record of whether person consented or declined test must be maintained in the medical record.

Non-Consensual Testing Following Employee Exposure: A health care worker, or an employee of a health care provider, who is significantly exposed to a patient may, without an informational consent, subject the patient's blood to a test for the presence of HIV if all of the following conditions apply:

1. The health care provider or employee uses universal precautions against significant exposure in emergency situations during which the time necessary for use of universal precautions would not endanger the life of the patient.
2. A physician, based on information provided, determines and certifies in writing that the health care provider or employee has been significantly exposed. This certification must accompany the request for testing and disclosure.
3. The test is performed on blood that was obtained for purposes other than HIV testing.
4. The source of the exposure must have been given the opportunity to consent to HIV testing.

It is important in such cases that the request for HIV testing indicate that it is nonconsensual. The results are then made available only to the exposed individual and his/her physician, and the results do not reveal the patient's identity.

For diagnostic testing of patients when order through MeriterCare, informational consent will be documented at the time the physician places the orders. For non-interfaced orders sent to Meriter Laboratories, it is the physician's responsibility to provide informed consent to the patient when requesting an order for an HIV. This should be documented not only in the patient's medical record at the ordering facility but additionally on the requisition.

HIV testing on subjects ≥ 14 years old require the subject's signature on the consent form.