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Informed Consent for HIV Testing in Pregnancy

According to state law and professional community standards, all pregnant women in Washington are offered HIV screening. HIV is the virus that causes AIDS. The HIV test detects the presence of HIV antibodies in the blood.

Why is testing in pregnancy important?

Pregnant women who are HIV positive can transmit the HIV virus to their child during pregnancy, childbirth, and possibly while breastfeeding. HIV has no cure. It weakens the body's immune system, preventing it from protecting the body against disease and even death. HIV-positive pregnant women who are treated with a medication, called AZT, during pregnancy, greatly decrease the chance of spreading the disease to their child.

How do I know if I'm at risk for having HIV?

We recommend that every pregnant woman be tested for HIV regardless of whether or not she has risk factors. This is because 50% of HIV positive patients report having no identifiable risk factors.

Risk Factors

1. Past or current use of IV drugs.
2. History of 1 or more blood transfusions between the years of 1977 and 1985.
3. Past or current diagnosis with a sexually transmitted infection.
4. Past or current sex history of bisexuality or homosexuality.
5. Past or current sex history of multiple sex partners.
6. Past or current sex history of unprotected sex at any time, with any partner.
7. Past or current sex history with a partner who can answer, "yes", to any of the above risk factors.

What if my test is positive?

If your HIV test is positive, the HIV test will be repeated 2 additional times in order to confirm the initial results. Three positive tests during pregnancy confirm the presence of HIV antibodies. If you receive 3 positive HIV tests during pregnancy, you will be diagnosed as being HIV-positive.

What if my test is negative?

A negative test result does NOT necessarily mean that you are HIV-negative. An HIV test can be negative if the test is performed in the beginning stages of the disease. If you can answer, "yes", to any of the above risk factors, you may want to consider getting re-tested 6 months after you receive the results of your first HIV test.

Where can I get an HIV test?

Due to the risk of experiencing possible discrimination within the workplace, from insurance companies, and in other of life's legal and social aspects, confidential or anonymous HIV testing is available. We offer confidential HIV testing in our office, meaning that we will know your HIV test results, but that we are required to gain your permission to pass your results onto a third party. Every one of Washington's County Health Departments offers free and anonymous HIV testing, meaning that no one will know of your results but you.

How do I protect myself from contracting HIV or from spreading HIV to other people?

Since HIV is spread through the exchange of bodily fluids you should avoid using IV drugs and refrain from having unprotected sex. It is recommended that you use latex condoms and other latex barriers during sex.

We encourage you to be tested for HIV but we cannot require that you do so.

I have read the above information and I understand the facts regarding HIV and HIV testing. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and all of my questions have been answered. Please check your response.

I consent to have an HIV antibodies test.

I decline to have an HIV antibodies test.

Signature _____ Date ____/____/____

Printed Name _____