

GetaKit is a University of Ottawa study to evaluate an online assessment and mail-out system for sexual health services, including testing and prevention. Available services include HIV self-tests, and lab-based testing for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, syphilis, hepatitis C, gonorrhea and chlamydia. The research team is based at the University of Ottawa, and the study is funded by the Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN) and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC).

To participate, you must be at least 18 years of age (HIV self-test) and at least 16 years of age (lab based HIV and STI testing). You must also be able to confirm at least one contact method (either a cell phone number or an email) and be willing to answer some questions to determine the type of testing that is right for you. Some of these questions might be uncomfortable, and some questions may not apply to you, but answer the best you can.

Participating in this study means that you give permission to the research team to upload the information on this form to a secure and encrypted database. These data will be used to answer questions like, (1) Are we reaching the people who need testing for HIV and sexually transmitted infections? (2) Are people submitting their results if they receive an HIV self-test, and completing lab-based HIV and STI testing if they order requisitions? (3) What infections are being identified and people being linked to treatment and services if they require follow-up? This will provide valuable information about distribution and support systems for people testing for STBIs. We will aggregate these data and present and publish them in ways that do not identify you.

Obtaining lab-based HIV and STI testing through GetaKit means that your lab results (negative, positive, cancelled, invalid, etc.) will be sent to the local clinicians who are ordering this testing for you and who will provide you with treatment if needed. Participating in this study also means that you acknowledge that these infections are reportable to Public Health. If you receive a positive test result, you may receive a call from your local public health unit to follow-up on the result and/or arrange treatment, if required. The HIV blood test offered through GetaKit.ca uses your name and health card number. This means that if you were to test positive for HIV, the results will be reported to your local public health unit. They will contact you about follow-up HIV care and help your partner(s) access testing and care.

The HIV self-test is the only exception, and results of the self-test are not reportable to public health. If you receive an HIV self-test through the website, you are under no obligation to report your test results in your account. But if you do report your result, we will link you to programs, such as HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) or other HIV prevention services, or to immediate clinical care if you receive a positive result.

A positive HIV self-test requires confirmatory blood test (serology), which can be either 'nominal' or 'anonymous'. The HIV blood test offered through GetaKit is nominal, meaning you are tested using your name and health card or health insurance number. Anonymous testing is available in other healthcare settings, without using your name. You do not need a health card or health insurance number to get an anonymous test.

If the HIV blood test is positive, you will receive information about HIV transmission and HIV care, as well as a referral for HIV treatment. With HIV treatment, a person's health status and life expectancy are the same as people who are HIV-negative. Also, treatment can make an HIV-positive person unable to transmit HIV to others. You are under no obligation to accept this referral, and if you decline it, you may always return for a referral in the future.

Your participation in the GetaKit study is entirely voluntary. It is your choice to be tested for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. This means that no one can force you to test, and you should not force someone else to test. Consent and willingness to test is a fundamental feature of HIV and STI testing..

It is important to know your HIV status to take care of your health, but it is also important for you to know about the laws that might impact people living with HIV. Legally, you do not have to tell most people that you are living with HIV, but it can be considered a crime not to tell a sexual partner. To better understand the law, contact the [HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario](#). If you test positive for HIV, it is important for you to understand your rights and how the law impacts you before you disclose your status.

You can withdraw from the GetaKit study at any point by writing to GetaKit@uOttawa.ca. Your information will not be used in any GetaKit reports after the date of your withdrawal. Because your account contains health information it cannot be deleted and is subject to the same retention requirements as any other health record. It will instead be deactivated so that your records can still be accessed as per health records regulations, but your information will not be included in any reports or publications after the date of your withdrawal.

If you have any questions, please write us at GetaKit@uOttawa.ca. You can also contact the Principal Investigator, Patrick O'Byrne, at Patrick.OByrne@uOttawa.ca.