

## **BASHH Statement on HIV window period**

15 March 2010

HIV testing using the latest (4th generation) tests are recommended in the BHIVA / BASHH / BIS UK guidelines for HIV testing (2008). These assays test for HIV antibodies and p24 antigen simultaneously. They will detect the great majority of individuals who have been infected with HIV at one month (4 weeks) after specific exposure.

Patients attending for HIV testing who identify a specific risk occurring more than 4 weeks previously, should not be made to wait 3 months (12 weeks) before HIV testing. They should be offered a 4th generation laboratory HIV test and advised that a negative result at 4 weeks post exposure is very reassuring/highly likely to exclude HIV infection. An additional HIV test should be offered to all persons at 3 months (12 weeks) to definitively exclude HIV infection. Patients at lower risk may opt to wait until 3 months to avoid the need for HIV testing twice.

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