



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF  
PLASTIC SURGEONS®

# Informed Consent

## Hepatitis and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Testing

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

It is important that you read this information carefully and completely. Please initial each page, indicating that you have read the page, and sign the consent for testing as proposed by your plastic surgeon.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Hepatitis**

Viral hepatitis is an infection of the liver by a virus. There are several different types of hepatitis viruses that can cause this disorder. Laboratory tests can help identify what type of hepatitis a patient has. The tests can also help determine whether a patient has become immune to the hepatitis virus or is a carrier of the virus. Carriers could potentially infect others who might come in contact with his or her blood or body fluids. Tests can determine if a patient has developed immunity to specific hepatitis viruses after receiving hepatitis vaccine(s).

Any form of hepatitis can be a serious illness. Chronic liver disorders including liver cancer can be caused by hepatitis. It is possible that a patient is infected with different types of hepatitis viruses.

### **Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)**

Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is a life-threatening disorder of the immune system. It is caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). The virus can be transmitted by sexual contact with an infected person, by exposure to infected blood (as in needle sharing during intravenous drug use or rarely, as a result of blood transfusion), or from an infected mother to her newborn infant. Persons at high risk of contracting AIDS include those who have had sexual contact with another individual infected with HIV, intravenous drug users, and hemophiliacs. A person infected with HIV may not know that they have been infected until they are tested. Although individuals infected with HIV may remain free of symptoms for years, they are capable of transmitting HIV to others. AIDS does not typically develop until a person has been infected with HIV for several years.

Laboratory testing of a patient's blood is needed to determine hepatitis and/or HIV infection.

## **THE HEPATITIS AND HIV TEST**

Before consenting to a hepatitis and HIV test, please read the following important information:

1. **Purpose.** This test is done to determine whether you may have been infected with hepatitis and/or HIV. This test is not a test for AIDS; AIDS can only be diagnosed by medical evaluation.
2. **Positive test results.** If you test positive, you may be infected with hepatitis and/or HIV. You should seek medical follow up with your personal physician.
3. **Accuracy.** The test result is not 100% accurate. Possible errors include:
  - a. **False positive:** The test gives a positive result, even though you are not infected. This happens only rarely. Retesting will help confirm the validity of a positive test.
  - b. **False negative:** The test gives a negative result, even though you are infected with hepatitis and/or HIV. This is most likely to happen in recently infected persons.

## **ALTERNATIVES TO THE HEPATITIS AND HIV TEST**

You should carefully evaluate why you are having the hepatitis and HIV test. You should ask the person offering to test you what alternatives to being tested exist.

## **BENEFITS FROM HAVING THE HEPATITIS AND HIV TEST**

Laboratory testing for hepatitis and HIV offers useful information to a patient infected with these viruses. Individuals who learn that they are infected with hepatitis and/or HIV can potentially prevent the transmission of these viruses to other individuals. Additionally, early diagnosis of HIV infection allows early intervention with prescription medications that may delay the onset of AIDS.



**RISKS FROM HAVING THE HEPATITIS AND HIV TEST**

A positive test result for either hepatitis or HIV may cause you significant anxiety. A positive test may result in un-insurability for life, health, or disability insurance policies for which you may apply in the future. Although prohibited by law, discrimination in housing, employment, or public accommodations may result from disclosure of a positive test result.

Testing for hepatitis and HIV and the test results are confidential, except where you have authorized the disclosure or where the disclosure is otherwise required or permitted by law. Make sure you ask the person administering the test whether you have to give authorization to release this information and, if so, to whom.

If your test result for hepatitis and/or HIV confirms the presence of infection, your physician may recommend additional medical care and diagnostic testing to obtain more information. This would result in additional expense to you.

You are responsible for all charges of hepatitis and HIV testing whether the tests give positive or negative results.

**YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO ASK QUESTIONS AND OBTAIN FURTHER INFORMATION**

If you have any questions relating to AIDS, the HIV test, hepatitis, and the consequences of being tested or not being tested, make sure you get satisfactory answers from the person offering the test or another knowledgeable person before you agree to testing.

**OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

For more information about AIDS, HIV, hepatitis, and the laboratory tests involved, call your local city or state health department.

**RELEASE OF RESULTS OF HEPATITIS and HIV TESTING**

If you wish to have the results of your hepatitis and HIV test released to others, including insurance companies, other health care providers, or governmental agencies, you must sign a separate release-of-medical-information form.

**I HAVE READ AND CONSENT TO TESTING FOR HIV AND HEPATITIS:**

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE/TIME \_\_\_\_\_

WITNESS \_\_\_\_\_

DATE/TIME \_\_\_\_\_