



Patient Information

Emergency Department Blood Borne Virus
Screening



Many people are living with an undiagnosed Blood Borne Virus (BBV). To ensure these infections are picked up as early as possible, all patients attending our adult Emergency Department, aged 16 and over, will now be tested for Blood Borne Viruses (BBVs). These include hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV.

Hepatitis B and C are viruses that affect the liver, and HIV affects the immune system.

This method of testing has already been adopted by hospitals in London, Blackpool, Manchester and Brighton, successfully linking many patients to treatment. Hepatitis B and HIV can be managed with medication helping to prevent health complications that can develop as a result of uncontrolled chronic (long-term) infection. Hepatitis C is now curable. Medication for all these conditions helps to prevent transmission.

Consent

Testing for BBVs in our Emergency Department will occur on an 'opt-out' basis. This means if you have a blood sample taken as part of your care, we will automatically test for BBVs.

This is to help us detect as many undiagnosed people as possible. If you do not want your blood to be tested, please refer to the section 'How do I opt-out?'

If you are not required to have a blood test during your visit, you will not be tested for BBVs.

This project go-live is March 2025.

What does an Emergency Department Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C or HIV test involve?

To test for Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV an additional sample will be added alongside other blood tests. If you are not having a blood test in the Emergency Department you will not be offered these tests.

How long after acquiring Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C or HIV can it be detected?

It can take 6-12 weeks for HIV and up to 6 months for Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C to be detectable in a blood test after you have been infected. If you have had a recent risk, you can get another test through your GP or sexual health service.

How do I find out my results?

If your result is negative...

A negative result means that you did not have Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C or HIV when we did the test. If you do not hear from us within 4 weeks you can assume your test results are negative.



If your test result is reactive...

If your test is reactive (provisional positive) we will contact you directly to arrange an appointment with the relevant specialist service to discuss the next steps. If we are unable to process your test for technical reasons you will be contacted by a member of the team and directed to testing options in the community.

For further information about test results you can contact our ED BBV Tracker edbbvtesting@mkuh.nhs.uk

What if my contact details change or are incorrect?

Please ensure the Emergency Department team have your current telephone number, address and GP practice during your attendance. Please let a member of staff know if they need to be updated.

If your contact details change in the 14 days following your test, please contact ED BBV Tracker edbbvtesting@mkuh.nhs.uk

How do I opt out?

Many people do not realise they are infected with Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C or HIV. This is why we are testing everyone that comes to our Emergency Department so that we can offer lifesaving treatment. All results will be kept confidential, and we will only contact you if you have a provisional positive result.

If you do not want to have your blood tested for Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C or HIV please inform the member of staff taking your blood.

Transmission and stigma

Stigma, discrimination, a lack of awareness and health inequalities remain major barriers to preventing transmission of hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV. Testing in Emergency Departments has been shown to increase access to testing for people least likely to present for testing in other healthcare settings such as sexual health services or with their GP. We hope ED opt-out testing at Milton Keynes University Hospital will normalise testing for BBVs and remove stigma associated with risk-based testing strategies as anyone having a blood test is eligible for testing.

I did not have blood tests in the Emergency Department, how can I access Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV screening in the community?

Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B testing is available via your GP and sexual health services

- www.icash.nhs.uk

Visit www.mkuh.nhs.uk for accessibility and translation services.



Hepatitis C

Patients with an English postcode can order a free finger prick home testing kit from:
[Home - HepC \(hepctest.nhs.uk\)](http://Home-HepC.hepctest.nhs.uk)

HIV

Home tests for HIV can be requested via sexual health services or:

- [Free HIV Kits for testing at Home | Freetesting HIV](#)
- www.icash.nhs.uk

Not everyone will be eligible for a test via these websites due to how services are funded. There may be an eligibility criteria. If you are unable to request a test online, we'd recommend attending your GP or local sexual health service.

Where can I find further support and advice outside of the hospital?

There are several charities with helplines that provide further support to patients and to patient's friends, relatives and carers.

The British Liver Trust

If you or someone you know has been affected by liver disease, including hepatitis B, and you want to talk to someone about it, please get in touch.

Telephone: 0800 652 7330

Online form: [Contact Us - British Liver Trust](#)

Open weekdays 9am to 3pm

Website: [British Liver Trust - Pioneering Liver Health](#)

The Hepatitis C Trust

If you or someone you know has been affected by hepatitis C and you want to talk to someone about it, please get in touch.

Telephone: 020 7089 6221

Open weekdays 10.30am to 4.30pm

(Opening hours may vary on Bank Holidays and over the Christmas period)

Email: helpline@hepctrust.org.uk

Website: [The Hepatitis C Trust | Hep C charity \(hepctrust.org.uk\)](#)

The Terrance Higgins Trust

If you or someone you know has been affected by HIV and you want to talk to someone about it, please get in touch.

Telephone: 0808 802 1221

Visit www.mkuh.nhs.uk for accessibility and translation services.



Open weekdays 10am to 6pm.

(Opening hours may vary on Bank Holidays and over the Christmas period)

Email: info@tht.org.uk

Live Chat: Available Monday to Friday, 11am to 1pm and 3pm to 5pm.

Website: [Home | Terrence Higgins Trust \(tht.org.uk\)](#)

Who should I contact at Milton Keynes University Hospital for further information?

ED BBV Tracker

Email: edbbvtesting@mkuh.nhs.uk



We encourage patients to be involved in their care by:

1. Being part of the conversation and shared decision making
2. Asking questions if something is not clear
3. Speaking up if you have concerns

Checks are there to protect you and you can be part of them. Behave with respect and kindness towards healthcare professionals.

We ask for information about you so that you can receive proper care and treatment. This information remains confidential and is stored securely by the Trust in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018/GDPR. Further guidance can be found within our privacy notice found on our Trust website: www.mkuh.nhs.uk

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Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Standing Way, Eaglestone, Milton Keynes, MK6 5LD

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