

## **Infected Blood Inquiry**

The guidance below from NHS England has been put together in response to the inquiry.

### **Key messages**

#### **Hepatitis C**

Patients who are concerned about a possible hepatitis C infection, can book a home NHS test online. The tests are free and confidential. To receive a self-testing kit people should visit [heptest.nhs.uk](https://heptest.nhs.uk). Alternatively, they can request a blood test via the practice.

#### **HIV**

It is unlikely there are people living with undetected HIV from the infected blood period, however, concerned patients can be pointed towards information on HIV diagnosis and the HIV testing services search tool. Home testing and home sampling kits are available.

#### **Hepatitis B**

Hepatitis B, another infection that can be linked to infected blood, usually clears up on its own without treatment, but some patients acquire chronic hepatitis B. Patients concerned about hepatitis B infection can be directed towards relevant hepatitis B information or to contact their GP practice or local sexual health clinic.

#### **Other information:**

We know that people may be concerned about their own health following recent media coverage, so the NHS has set up a new online resource for patients and the public to find help and support - <https://nhs.uk/infected-blood-support>

Since 1991, all blood donated in the UK is screened and distributed by NHS Blood and Transplant following rigorous safety standards and testing to protect both donors and patients.

Since testing has been introduced, the risk of getting an infection from a blood transfusion or blood products is very low.

There have been no reported and confirmed cases of hepatitis C, from any UK blood component, since a 1997 transfusion and for HIV from a transfusion in 2002.

All blood donors are screened at every donation and every donation is tested before it is sent to hospitals. Blood services and blood safety has been transformed not only in terms of technological advances in testing but also in the way donors are recruited and checked they are safe to donate.