

## UCSD Offers Free Test That Can Detect HIV as Early as One Week after Exposure

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Debra Kain

UC-San Diego's Antiviral Research Center (AVRC) is offering free and confidential HIV testing to people who may have a very recent infection with HIV, the retrovirus that can lead to AIDS. The Early Test Program - offered in collaboration with the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency - offers a new test method that checks for the presence of the HIV virus, which can be detected within a week of infection. In contrast, a regular HIV test looks for antibodies in the blood, which can take three months or more to detect.

"An individual can get the Early Test, which also detects hepatitis C infections, as early as one week after a potential HIV exposure," said Susan Little, M.D., associate professor of medicine in UCSD's Division of Infectious Diseases. "This is especially important because newly infected individuals have a very high viral load. Therefore, these people are highly infectious at a time when they may be unaware they have HIV."

Early detection of HIV and hepatitis C infection is also helpful since treatment options and outcomes may be very different depending on the stage of infection, according to Little.

The "Early Test" Program is offered at the following four sites in San Diego County to those who may be in the early stages of HIV infection:

UCSD AVRC\* 150 W Washington Street San Diego, CA. 92103 By appointment only: 619-543-8080 \* *At this location, test is being offered to couples only, or those at very high risk of infection.*

County Health Services Complex 3851 Rosecrans St San Diego, CA 92110 619-296-2120 Monday - Thursday: 7:30 am - 4:00 pm

The Center's Health Services\* 2313 El Cajon Blvd San Diego, CA 92103 Tuesday & Thursday: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm \* *Arrive at 9 am and receive an appointment for the same day*

Family Health Centers of San Diego Tuesday Night Clinic 3544 30th St, San Diego, CA 92104 Tuesday: 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm Monday & Wednesday - call for appointment 619-543-8080

For more information about the Early Test, go to: <http://theearlytest.ucsd.edu> or call 877-323-5050.

Media Contact: Debra Kain, 619-543-6163