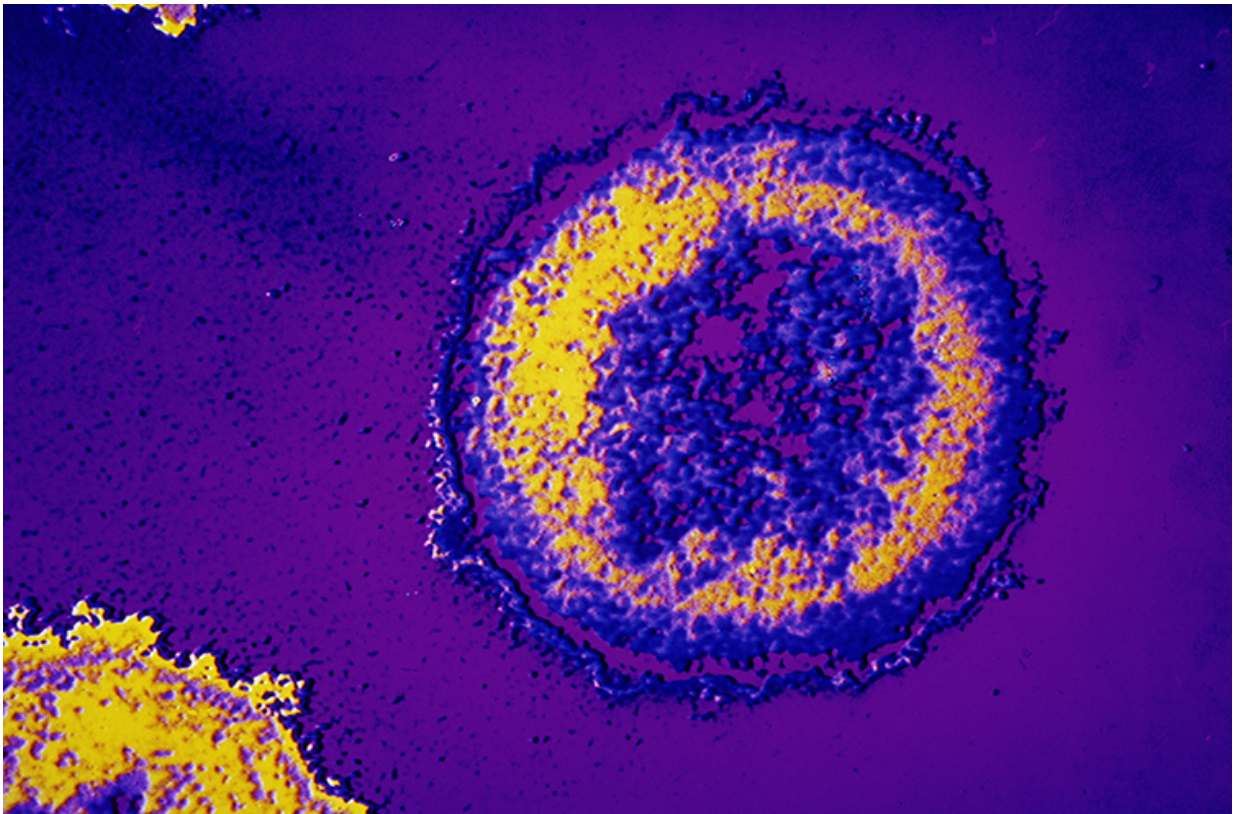


Research finds home-based kit would increase HIV testing

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Credit: Louisiana State University

Research led by William Robinson, PhD, Associate Research Professor of Behavioral & Community Health Sciences at LSU Health New Orleans School of Public Health, has found that 86% of heterosexuals

who are at high risk for HIV would use a home-based test kit provided by mail and 99% would seek treatment based on a positive result. This self-administered alternative may lead a group whose high risk is under-recognized to treatment sooner. The paper is published in the *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome* and is available online.

"In 2014, 24% of new HIV infections were attributed to [heterosexual](#) activity," notes Dr. Robinson. "Yet many at-risk individuals do not test routinely or have never been tested."

A total of 470 respondents were surveyed as part of the New Orleans arm of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National HIV Behavioral Surveillance of Heterosexuals at increased risk for HIV study in 2013. Eligibility requirements were that participants were 18 years of age or older, residents of the New Orleans metropolitan area, able to take the survey in English and reported having sex with a partner of the opposite sex within the past 12 months.

Of all participants included in the analysis, 85.56% reported that they would be willing to take a home-based test if it was mailed to them by a research study or health department and of those, 54.19% reported that they would return the result back to the provider. Most of remaining participants (43%) reported that they would prefer to only tell their doctor. Only 8 participants (1.7%) reportedly would not reveal the result to anyone.

"Our findings demonstrate that home-based testing could be an effective means to reach some heterosexuals who have never been tested," says Robinson.

Limitations of the study were noted, including that the data were self-reported and that participants were recruited through respondent-driven sampling.

The authors conclude that although further research is needed to evaluate the epidemiologic context under which the assumptions of these models hold true as well as the ethical and logistic considerations, it is clear that increased testing is a critical component of controlling the HIV epidemic.

More information: William T. Robinson et al, Preferences for Home-Based HIV Testing Among Heterosexuals at Increased Risk for HIV/AIDS, *JAIDS Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes* (2017). [DOI: 10.1097/QAI.0000000000001410](https://doi.org/10.1097/QAI.0000000000001410)

Provided by Louisiana State University

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