

# Mailed HIV self-tests can improve access to testing in priority audiences

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Mailed HIV-self tests (HIVSTs) can increase testing among persons who have never received testing for HIV or have not received testing in the past year, according to research published in the June 20 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Travis Sanchez, from Emory University in Atlanta, and colleagues examined use of HIVSTs, which were publicized by the CDC to priority audiences, particularly those disproportionately affected by HIV. The online ordering portal was launched March 14, 2023, to expand distribution of HIVSTs directly to consumers.

Through March 13, 2024, 443,813 tests were distributed to 219,360 persons. The researchers found that of the 169,623 persons who answered at least one question on a postorder questionnaire, 67.9 percent were from priority audiences, and 24.1 and 24.8 percent had never previously received HIV testing and had not received testing in the past year, respectively. Among those who initiated a follow-up survey, 88.3, 27.1, 11.7, and 1.9 percent used an HIVST themselves, gave away an HIVST, accessed additional preventive services, and reported a new positive HIVST result, respectively.

"Clinicians, [community organizations](#), and [public health officials](#) need to be aware of HIVST programs, initiate discussions about HIV testing conducted outside their clinics or offices, and initiate follow-up services for persons who report a positive or negative HIVST result," the authors write.

One author disclosed ties to OraSure Technologies for related work; a second author disclosed ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

**More information:** Travis Sanchez et al, Findings from the First Year of a Federally Funded, Direct-to-Consumer HIV Self-Test Distribution Program—United States, March 2023–March 2024, *MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (2024). [DOI: 10.15585/mmwr.mm7324a4](https://doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7324a4)

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