Where is RNA testing available?
RNA testing is available in King County for all gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (MSM) who test for HIV at these locations.
- STD Clinic at Harborview
- Gay City Health Project
- Downtown needle exchange
- Bathhouses
- Center for MultiCultural Health

RNA testing is also available in some doctors’ offices. Talk to your provider. Other individuals at high risk for HIV (e.g., people who have sex or share needles with a partner who has HIV) who have symptoms of acute infection may be able to get RNA testing on a case-by-case basis through the STD Clinic. Most private doctors can provide RNA testing, but the patient will pay a fee.

How is RNA testing done?
RNA testing requires a blood sample. Finger stick or rapid versions are not yet available.

Can you get an RNA test along with an HIV antibody test?
Yes. If you take a rapid test, you will have to give a blood sample for RNA testing. If blood is collected for some other reason (like syphilis screening), it can also be used for RNA testing.

How long does it take to get results?
It takes longer to get RNA results because RNA tests are processed differently than antibody tests. Some RNA results may come back in 1 week, but 2 weeks is the average.

How reliable is an RNA test?
Both RNA and antibody tests can sometimes produce false positive results. False positive RNA test results occur in 2.6 - 5% of testers, depending on how common HIV infection is in the population. People who test RNA-positive should have a repeat blood draw and an antibody test (after the window period) to confirm RNA results.

Can an RNA test be anonymous?
Yes. The testing provider can discuss the pros and cons of both confidential and anonymous testing. Confidential testing is the best way to assure people will get their results.

HIV/STD Program
206-263-2000
www.kingcounty.gov/health/hiv
Symptoms of Acute HIV Infection

Within the first month after infection, about half of all people infected have at least one of the following symptoms:

- fever
- fatigue
- rash
- sore throat
- headache
- night sweats
- diarrhea
- nausea
- vomiting
- swollen tonsils and/or other lymph nodes
- joint or muscle ache

Diagnosing early infection is important!

- With early diagnosis, people can take better care of their health and may have more treatment options.
- They can also take steps to avoid giving HIV to others. People may be up to 10 times more likely to infect their sex partners during the first few months after getting HIV. This is partly due to the very high levels of HIV in the blood.