



M O D U L E 3

HIV Testing and Counselling of Pregnant Women



Module 3: Objectives

- Discuss the importance of HIV testing and counselling
- Describe the opt-in and opt-out approaches to HIV testing of pregnant women
- Identify risks and benefits of HIV testing
- List the types of HIV testing



Module 3: Objectives

- Discuss the advantages of providing rapid HIV testing and counselling to pregnant women
- Explain the role of pre- and post-test counselling
- Demonstrate basic concepts of professional counselling



Module 3: Content

- Section1:
Overview of HIV Testing and Counselling of Pregnant Women
- Section2:
HIV testing
- Section3:
Pre-test information and Counselling
- Section4:
Post-test information and Counselling
- Exercises



HIV Testing and Counselling for Pregnant Women

Section 1

Overview of HIV Testing and Counselling of Pregnant Women



HIV Testing and Counselling

- Plays vital role in identifying women who are HIV-positive to provide services
- Provides an entry point to comprehensive HIV/AIDS treatment, care, and support
- Helps identify and reduce behaviours that increase HIV transmission risks
- Becomes available to all women of childbearing age and their male partners



Advantages of HIV testing in Pregnant women

- In women testing HIV-negative: it helps modify behaviors that increase the risk of HIV infection.

- In women testing HIV-positive, it helps:
 - Make informed decisions about their pregnancy
 - Receive PMTCT interventions
 - know the importance of delivering in a health facility
 - Secure early access to HIV treatment, care and support services
 - Prevent HIV transmission to others



HIV Testing and Counselling

HIV Testing

The process that determines whether a person is infected with HIV

HIV Counselling

Confidential discussion(s) between an individual and their care provider to examine HIV transmission risk and explore HIV testing

HIV Testing and Counselling

A flexible intervention integrated into ANC settings



HIV Testing and Counselling

All pregnant women in ANC should receive information on:

- **Safer sexual practices**
- **Prevention and treatment of STIs**
- **PMTCT**
- **Post-test counselling and follow-up services**



Guiding Principles for TC in PMTCT

- Confidentiality
- Informed Consent
- Post-test support and services



Guiding Principles for TC in PMTCT

Confidentiality

- All patient information is kept private
- Information is shared only with providers directly involved in care—and only on a “need to know” basis
- All medical records and registers are kept in secure place



Guiding Principles for TC in PMTCT

Informed Consent

- Clarifies the purpose, advantages, and disadvantages of testing
- Ensures understanding of the TC process
- Respects the client's testing decision



Guiding Principles for TC in PMTCT

Post-test support and services

- Always give results in person
- Provide appropriate post-test information
- Offer counselling or referral



Pre-test Information or Counseling

Exercise 3.1

Dynamic of a Group Information: role play



Approaches to HIV Testing in PMTCT

Opt-In

- Explicit request to be tested
- Written or verbal informed consent

Opt-Out

- Testing routinely offered
- Clients are not explicitly asked to be tested
- Client may refuse



Preferred Strategy: Opt-Out

Opt-Out approach

- Normalises HIV testing by integrating it into ANC care
- Increases the number of women who receive testing and PMTCT interventions
- May increase the uptake of PMTCT services including testing



HIV Testing and Counselling for Pregnant Women

Section 2

HIV Testing



Test Selection Decision

- **National/local policies**
- **Availability of supplies**
- **Availability of trained personnel**
- **Evaluation of specific tests in Nigeria**
- **Cost of test kits and supplies**



Steps in the Testing Process

- 1) Obtain test sample
 - **Blood, saliva, urine**
- 2) Process sample, on site or through lab
- 3) Obtain results
 - **Keep confidential**
 - **Method determined by clinic protocols and client**
- 4) Provide results to client
- 5) Provide post-test counseling, support, and referral



Antibody Tests

Rapid Tests

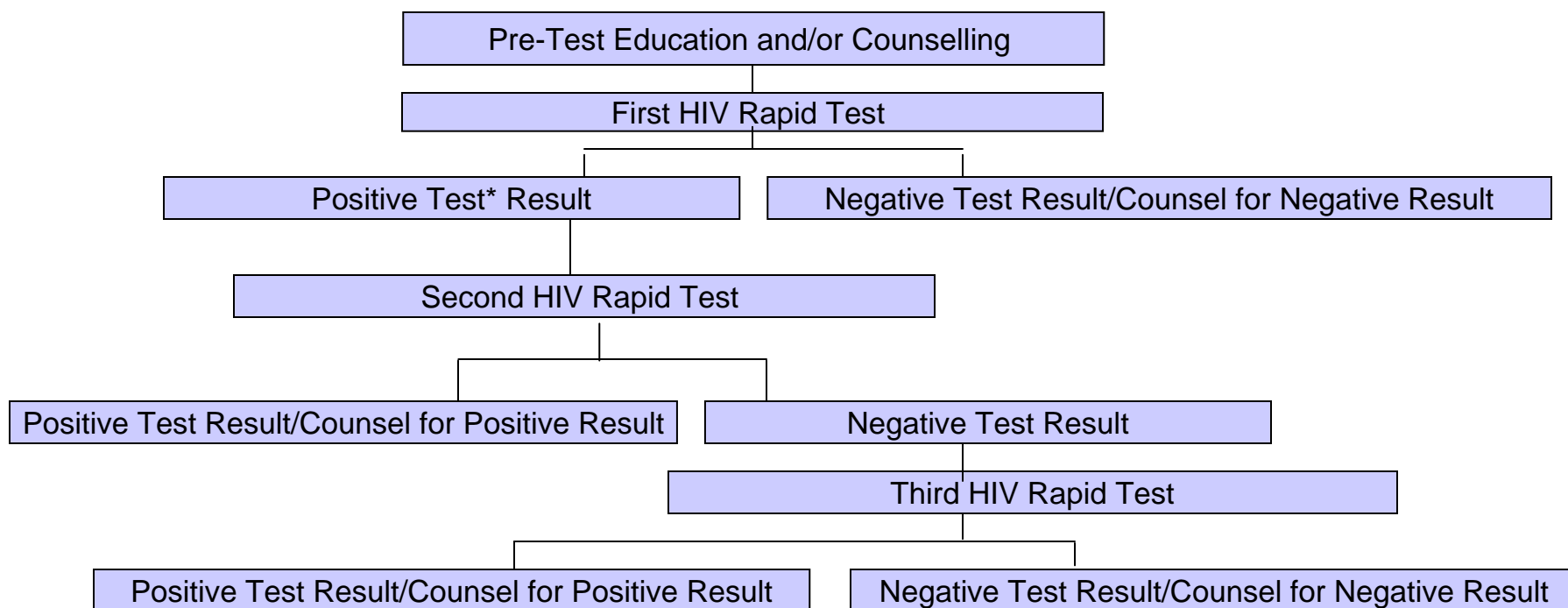
- Sample: blood from finger prick, saliva swabs
- Lab: no special equipment
- Ease: minimal training
- Result time: less than 30 minutes

ELISA

- Sample: blood from arm
- Lab: special equipment
- Ease: trained lab technician
- Result time: up to 2 weeks



Algorithm for Use of 3 Rapid HIV Tests in Testing and Counselling Services (Serial Testing)



- In the context of labour in a MTCT-prevention setting, it is advised to give a single dose of nevirapine on the basis of a single positive rapid test. The test result should be confirmed after delivery.
- First rapid test: **Capillus**; 2nd rapid test: **Genie II**; 3rd rapid test (tie-breaker): **Determine**



HIV Viral Antigen Tests

HIV viral antigen tests (or assays) detect the presence of HIV in blood and must be done by laboratory personnel

- **PCR** (polymerase chain reaction) tests detect DNA or measure RNA (viral load) in the blood
- **p24** antigen tests measure one of the proteins found in HIV (not yet available in Nigeria)



HIV testing

Exercise 3.2

HIV Testing Demonstration: observation



HIV Testing and Counselling for PMTCT

Section 3

Pre-Test Information and Counselling



Pre-Test Information Provision

- Prepares women and partners for the testing and counselling process
- Explores personal HIV risk
- Protects confidentiality



Individual Pre-Test Counselling

- May be offered in ANC and labour and delivery settings
- Refer when indicated to trained HIV counsellors or VCT site



Group Information Provision

- HIV and AIDS
- Transmission and prevention
- HIV testing and test result interpretation
- Right to ask for Individual counselling and risk assessment
- Right to refuse HIV test



Working with Couples

- Provides testing and counselling to male partners
- Emphasises male responsibility to protect the health of partner and family
- Reduces “blaming” the woman
- Identifies discordant couples



Discordant Couples

One partner is not infected with HIV
and the other is infected with HIV

- Discuss safer sex options
- Refer the partner infected with HIV for treatment, care and support



Counselling and testing for women of unknown HIV status at labour and delivery

- May be difficult to test, offer counselling or obtain informed consent during labour
- Opt-out approach should be used during labor
 - May possibly start ARV prophylaxis regimen
 - May be possible to give ARV prophylaxis to mother and baby, or perhaps to baby alone
- Provide post-test counselling after delivery
- Efforts should be made to provide counselling and testing in ANC period



Pre-test Counselling or Information

Exercise 3.3 Providing Information: role play



HIV Testing and Counselling for Pregnant Women

Section 4

Post-Test Information and Counselling



Post-Test Counselling for ALL Women

- Provide the test result
- Clarify the meaning of the test result
- Provide PMTCT essential messages when indicated
- Provide support, information, and referral when indicated
- Encourage risk-reducing behaviour
- Encourage disclosure and partner testing



Post-Test Counselling

HIV-negative result

- Prevent future infection
- Review MTCT risk with new infection
- Educate partner and encourage partner testing



Post-Test Counselling

HIV-positive result

- Clarify understanding
- Acknowledge feelings
- Review benefits of knowing HIV status
- Address immediate concerns
- Schedule follow-up visit
- Provide name and telephone number of clinic and contact person



Disclosure

- Ensure confidentiality
- Respect woman's choices
- Encourage partner testing
- Review prevention of transmission
- Identify support



Topic to cover during subsequent ANC visits

- Interventions for PMTCT
- Counselling on infant–feeding
- Follow–up care and treatment for the woman and her infant
- Social support
- Counselling on family–planning



Post-test Counselling

Exercise 3.4

Providing Post-test Counselling: role play



Module 3: Key Points

- Pre-test information, HIV testing and post-test counselling should be available to all pregnant women on an opt-out basis
- The healthcare provider and the facility must maintain confidentiality of HIV status
- Partner testing and couples counselling are encouraged



Module 3: Key Points

- Rapid tests with same day results are the recommended procedure for most ANC settings
- Post-test counselling is important for all women:
 - For women who are not HIV-infected, emphasise the prevention of HIV infection
 - For women infected with HIV, provide referrals to the PMTCT programme and options for treatment, care, and support
- Disclosure skills building should be encouraged for all women regardless of HIV status