FIGURE 2. Diagnostic Testing for Acute HIV Infection

Person presents with signs/symptoms of acute HIV infection or reports high-risk exposure in the past 4 weeks.

Perform HIV RNA test [a]  
PLUS  
HIV antibody/antigen screening test

HIV RNA not detected  
AND  
antibody/antigen nonreactive

No laboratory evidence of HIV infection [d]

HIV RNA detected with <5000 copies/mL  
PLUS  
no serologic evidence of HIV infection [b]

Retest HIV RNA

HIV RNA not detected

HIV RNA detected

HIV RNA detected with >5000 copies/mL

No serologic evidence of HIV infection [b]

Serologic confirmation of HIV infection [c]

Confirmed HIV infection. Recommend ART [e]

Notes:

a. Viremia will be present several days before antibody detection
b. The absence of serologic evidence of HIV infection is defined as nonreactive screening result (antibody or antibody/antigen combination) or a reactive screening result with a nonreactive or indeterminate antibody-differentiation confirmatory result.
c. Serologic confirmation as defined by the CDC HIV testing algorithm. Western blot is no longer recommended as the confirmatory test because it may yield an indeterminate result during the early stages of seroconversion and may delay confirmation of diagnosis.
d. No further testing is indicated
e. See Antiretroviral Therapy guideline: http://www.hivguidelines.org/clinical-guidelines/adults/antiretroviral-therapy/

New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute: www.hivguidelines.org