Diagnosis and Management of Acute HIV Infection

July 2021

FIGURE 2. Diagnostic Testing for Acute HIV Infection

Person presents with signs/symptoms of acute HIV infection or reports an 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

No serologic evidence of HIV infection [b]

- HIV RNA detected

Serologic confirmation of HIV Infection [c]

- Presumptive diagnosis of acute HIV infection
- Recommend ART in consultation with an experienced HIV care provider
- 3 weeks later, perform diagnostic testing according to the CDC HIV testing algorithm

Confirmed HIV infection. Recommend ART

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 combined) or a reactive screening result with a nonreactive or indeterminate antibody-detection 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

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