Annex 5. Algorithm for early infant diagnosis


For newborns, test first at or around birth or at the first postnatal visit (usually 4–6 weeks). See also Table 5.1 on infant diagnosis.

Start ART, if indicated, without delay. At the same time, retest to confirm infection.

The risk of HIV transmission remains as long as breastfeeding continues.

**HIV-exposed infant or child <18 months**

- **Conduct diagnostic viral test**
  - **Viral test available**
    - **Positive**
      - Infant or child is likely infected
        - <24 months: immediately start ART and repeat viral test to confirm infection
    - **Negative**
      - Never breastfed
      - Infant or child is uninfected
      - Infant or child remains at risk of acquiring HIV infection until complete cessation of breastfeeding
  - **Viral test not available**
    - Ever breastfed or currently breastfeeding
    - Regular and periodic clinical monitoring

- Infant or child develops signs or symptoms suggesting HIV
  - **Viral test not available**
    - Infant remains well and reaches 9 months of age
      - Conduct HIV antibody test at approximately 9 months of age
      - **Positive**
        - Viral test not available: assume infected if sick; assume uninfected if well
        - HIV unlikely unless still breastfeeding
      - **Negative**
        - Start ART and repeat viral test to confirm infection
        - Repeat antibody test at 18 months of age and/or 6 weeks after cessation of breastfeeding
  - **Viral test available**
    - **Positive**
      - Infant remains well and reaches 9 months of age
        - Conduct HIV antibody test at approximately 9 months of age
      - **Negative**
        - Infant or child is HIV infected
        - Start ART and repeat viral test to confirm infection
        - Repeat antibody test at 18 months of age and/or 6 weeks after cessation of breastfeeding

*For newborns, test first at or around birth or at the first postnatal visit (usually 4–6 weeks). See also Table 5.1 on infant diagnosis.

*Start ART, if indicated, without delay. At the same time, retest to confirm infection.

*The risk of HIV transmission remains as long as breastfeeding continues.