



Text -1-

Is Home Testing for HIV a Good Idea?

- 1- Imagine if testing for HIV was as simple as a pregnancy stick test. A quick **swab** of your **gums**, and 20 minutes later a thin red line on the **device** could indicate the difference between a healthy life and coping with a deadly disease.
- 2- The test, which is called OraQuick Advance, is already being used in clinics in the US. Last week the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) started debating whether the kit should be available for people to test for HIV in their own homes, which would make it possible to identify the estimated 300,000 or more Americans who live with the infection but don't know about it. These people are the cause of 65 per cent of all new HIV infections in the US each year. People who know they are infected are 50 per cent less likely to transmit HIV than those who do not.
- 3- What is important is to understand the reaction of people who test positive at home. Without the **counselling** they could get in clinics, would they be more likely to get **depressed** or even **attempt suicide**? Studies have shown that people with HIV are 36 times more likely to commit suicide than people in the general population.
- 4- Opinions at the FDA debate were divided. For instance, a representative from the American Society for Microbiology insisted that exposing patients to such risks is "entirely irresponsible". But Frederic Lukas of the University of Washington Centre for **AIDS** Research in Seattle argued in favour of the home test and pointed out that women are not discouraged from doing home breast exams just because finding a **lump** might make them nervous.
- 5- The FDA also discussed whether people can **accurately** use OraQuick by themselves. The device detects **antibodies** that are produced in response to HIV. The person has to swab their upper and lower gum lines with a collector device that resembles a pregnancy test stick and then insert the absorbent end into a special solution for 20 minutes. When used in clinics, the device accurately detects antibodies 99, 3 per cent of the time. Initial trials carried out by the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia; suggest that members of the public can use OraQuick successfully, though further trials will be required for FDA **approval**.
- 6- If approved, the test could encourage the development of similar at-home tests for diseases such as syphilis, hepatitis C and **influenza**. And yet Bernard Pickle of the CDC cautions that tests for other diseases will take time, and notes that the FDA has already rejected proposals for over-the-counter tests for syphilis and influenza.

Terms & Meaning

### Reading Comprehension

- 1- What does the new test for HIV consist of?**
- 2- What is the FDA considering about its future use?**
- 3- What might be the positive and negative aspects?**
- 4- Why are home breast exams mentioned in the text?**
- 5- How reliable is the new device?**
- 6- For What other diseases might such a test be used?**

Help yourself

Words	Meaning
<b>HIV</b> —positive (=Séropositive)	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>Swab</b> --- to swab, to take a swab(= effectuer un prélèvement)	A small piece of cotton, gauze, or other absorbent material attached to the end of a stick, used to take a sample or clean a wound.
<b>The gum</b> = gingiva(pl. gingivae)	The layer of connective tissue that surrounds the roots of the teeth.
<b>Device</b>	A piece of equipment designed to perform a specific function
<b>Counselling depressed</b>	Professional advice and support, especially psychological suffering from mental state characterized by excessive sadness
<b>Attempt suicide</b>	To try to take one's own life
<b>Aids</b>	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
<b>Lump</b>	Mass or swelling that can be either benign or malignant
<b>Accurate</b>	Correct and exact, free from error
<b>Antibodies</b>	Blood proteins produced as part of the immune response of the presence of a particular antigen.
<b>Approval</b>	Official authorization or acceptance before a new drug is put on market.
<b>Influenza</b> (The flu)	An acute infections respiratory disease, caused by influenza viruses, characterized by fever, headache, muscle aches, and coughing.