

**Prevalence of HIV Testing Status and Factors Associated With its Utilization Among  
Patients Attending the Casualty Clinic at Mbagathi District Hospital -Nairobi, Kenya.**

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## ABSTRACT

HIV and AIDS remain a major public health problem, affecting mainly people in the productive and reproductive age group (15 to 49 years). HIV counseling and testing is a key component of both HIV care and prevention; however, uptake is currently low in Kenya. Therefore, this study was to determine the prevalence of HIV testing status and factors associated with its utilization among patients attending the casualty clinic at Mbagathi District Hospital, Nairobi Kenya. A hospital-based cross-sectional study employing both quantitative and qualitative techniques was conducted. Using systematic sampling, 220 patients aged 18 years and above, attending the casualty clinic at Mbagathi District Hospital, were sampled. Using a questionnaire in combination with face-to-face interviews, data was collected on HIV test usage and socio-demographic characteristics. The overall prevalence of self-reported HIV testing was 66.8%. HIV testing status for females was 68.7% and that of males was 64.4%. Factors that were significantly associated with HIV testing included; age: (P = 0.001, Odds ratio (OR) 3.4, 95% confidence interval (CI) 1.8 – 6.4), necessity to invite partners for HIV counseling and testing (P=0.007, OR=5.3 95% CI 1.6-17.8), knowledge of someone who had taken the HIV test (P=0.001, OR=3.7 95% CI 1.7-7.6), knowledge of HIV and HIV testing services available near place of residence (P=0.050, OR 2.1, 95% CI 1.0-4.3), attitude towards HIV and HIV testing (P=0.016, OR 2.074, 95% CI 1.142-3.767) and knowledge on transmission and protection from HIV and AIDS (P=0.048). A majority (53.1%) of those who were tested for HIV did so due to medical, pregnancy, employment, college or marital requirements. Thirty four percent tested voluntarily. The rest (12.9%) did so due to external influence. This study is part of a growing body of research on factors

associated with HIV testing and counseling. However, these results do not confirm the importance of some of the factors like religion, marital status and level of education's influence on HIV test uptake. Important factors that emerged as determining HIV test uptake were age, necessity to invite partners for HIV counseling and testing, knowledge of someone who had taken the HIV test and knowledge of HIV and HIV testing services available near place of residence. Understanding these factors could help interventions designed to promote uptake of HIV testing.