The detection of blood borne viruses

What happens to my blood sample?

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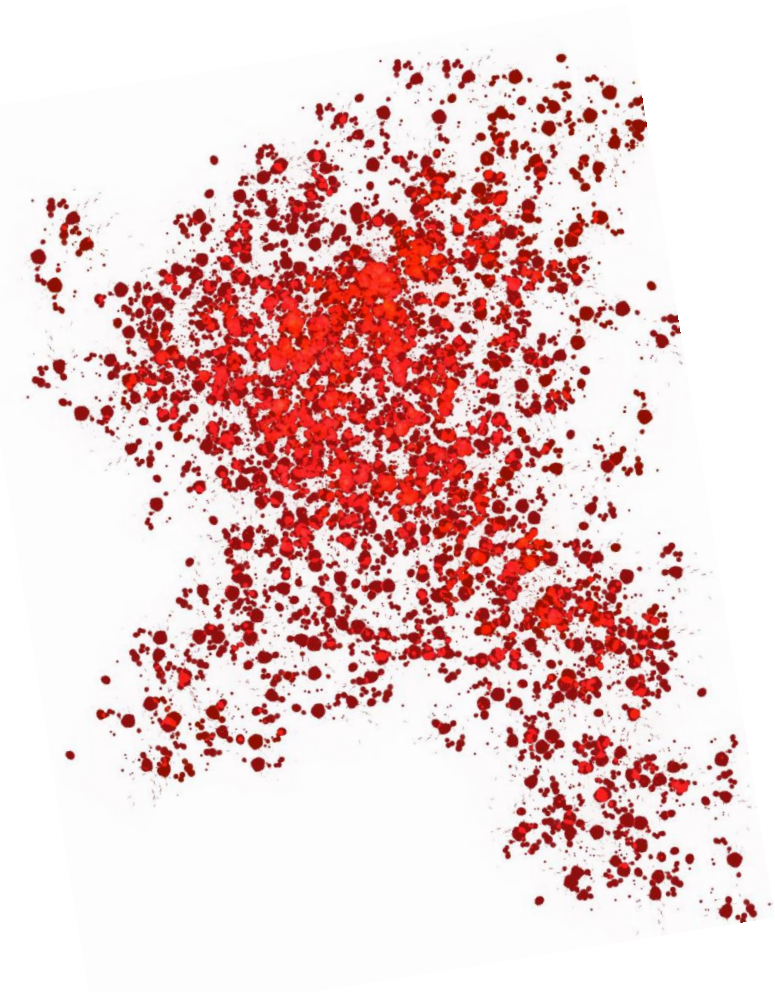


What are blood borne viruses?

Viruses such as HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C are considered *blood borne* since they can be detected in a blood sample or a dried blood spot

Anyone can test positive for a blood borne virus but you may be more at risk if you inject drugs or have unprotected sex

Importantly, these viruses are:

- **Highly infectious** and can spread to others in bodily fluids
- **Treatable once diagnosed**
- **Treatment controls disease and spread**

How do NHS laboratories test blood samples?

1

Blood samples are machine **screened** to detect the virus or an immune response to the virus

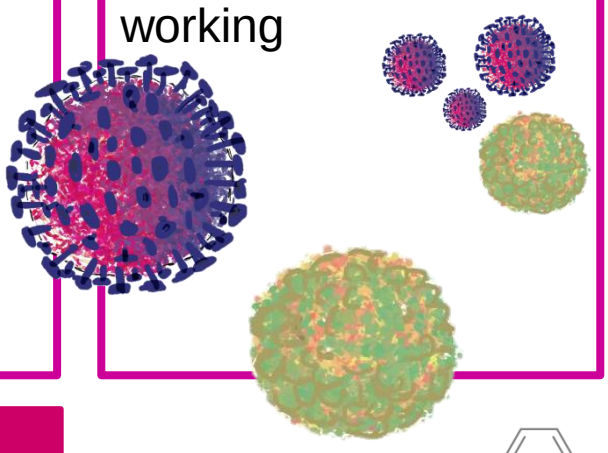
2

A **second confirmatory test** is performed on positive samples to **prevent false results**

If both of these tests are positive, the presence of a virus is confirmed

3

The **amount of virus** in a blood sample is measured to predict future responses and check drugs are working



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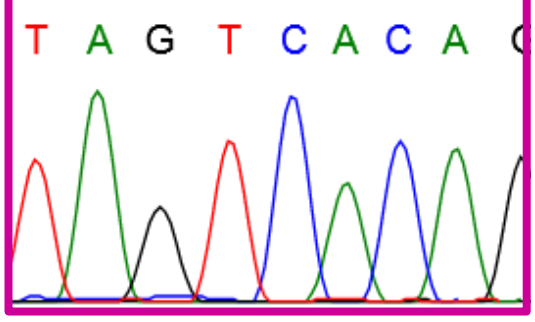
The virus' **genetic code is read** to check for mutations which could make it resistant to certain drugs



What happens next?

Biomedical and clinical scientists analyse and report the results to healthcare providers to ensure:

- **You know your status**
- If positive, you are referred to a specialist clinic
- The amount of virus in your blood is monitored
- Importantly, you receive the **correct medication**