

Feds want HIV tests to become routine

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Federal officials are reportedly planning to recommend U.S. physicians provide routine HIV testing for all of their patients ages 13 to 64.

Centers for Disease Control officials say they will make that recommendation as part of a sweeping revision of HIV guidelines, along with no longer requiring patients to sign informed-consent forms before submitting to an HIV test, The Wall Street Journal reported Monday.

The CDC says the move would simplify the process in order to reach as many infected people as possible, as early as possible. The CDC estimates about 25 percent of the 1 million people infected with HIV in the United States are unaware they carry the virus that eventually causes AIDS.

Critics contend such a move without mandatory informed consent might prevent some people from obtaining care, which would undermine HIV prevention goals. Critics are also upset about the erosion of privacy under another CDC recommendation that states switch to name-based HIV reporting instead of codes, the Journal noted.

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