Could I be HIV-Positive?

Q Dear June, I am 17 years old and I have

had a problem for some time. I took an

HIV test a while ago and the results were

negative. Despite that fact, I still think I’m

HIV positive. What can 1 due to eliminate the

fear and anxiety and accept the fact that I

am HIV negative?

Alexander

A Alexander, thank you for your letter. You sound extremely

worried that you are H IV-positive despite the test showing

that you are negative. Yes, it must have been very difficult for

you to take the test after suspecting that you may have

contracted the KIV virus.

Alexander, you seem preoccupied with the fact that you

may develop the Aids symptoms. From what you’ve shared, I

can see that It is extremely hard for you to focus your mind on

anything when you believe that you will die soon as there is no

cure for Aids.

Alex, many people continue to feel they have the HIV virus

even after they have taken the HIV test numerous times and the

results are negative. They also continue to worry even if they

are not exposing themselves to the virus. These people are

called the worried well and are usually uneasy and scared

about the possibility of having the illness.

Let us look at three reasons that could contribute to that Not knowing how the virus is transmitted

Belief by some people that they have whatever disease

that happens to be attracting attention at that lame Feeling of guilt about past sexual behaviour.

Alex, your anxiety about AIDS may make you adore

depressed than a person who knows he is H IV-positive. That

state of fear can actually cause signs that will appear to you

like you are -IIV-positive. These include fatigue, sweating,

weight loss, diarrhea, and these are also found n people who

are very anxious and depressed. So, you can see that these

signs can confirm your worst fears - that you are positive, when

actually, you are not! When you are anxious and depressed,

these feelings can make it difficult to accept the results of a

blood test.

I would strongly suggest that you talk to your guidance

and counselling teacher about your distress. He or she could

also give you more information on Aids. If you have put

yourself at risk of getting HIV in the past, and you’re feeling

guilty about it, talking it out would help you come to terms

with it. You could then avoid sex and prioritise on your

studies. I would also suggest that you keep yourself busy in

doing things that you like. Have time to socialize and get

involved in some sports. Decide to develop a talent that you

have. Art or poetry may put you at ease otherwise, I wish you

peace of mind.