



CONSEIL NATIONAL DU SIDA  
7 RUE D'ANJOU  
75008 PARIS  
T. 33 [0]1 40 56 68 50  
F. 33 [0]1 40 56 68 90  
CNS.SANTE.FR

**OPINION AND REPORT**

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SCREENING

OPINION AND REPORT ON OBLIGATORY OR  
SYSTEMATIC HIV SCREENING

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Following its report, the National AIDS Council issued the following Opinion :

The National AIDS Council is firmly opposed to any proposal to institute obligatory or systematic HIV screening in connection with prenatal and prenuptial medical consultations, and during national military service.

It is undeniable that knowledge of one's own HIV-positive status is therapeutically useful : early treatment can prolong the asymptomatic phase of the infection. But such usefulness, which is conditional upon the infected individual's agreement and acceptance, is not guaranteed by the test's being made compulsory irrespective of circumstances. The contrary is in fact true : the mandatory nature of the test would inevitably have the effect of dispensing physicians and other health and welfare professionals from their task of providing information, guidance and advice usually associated with personalized proposals for testing made during one-to-one interviews.