TuSalud

National HIV Testing Day 2022

"HIV Testing Is Self-Care" is this year's theme. Today, you have more options than ever to get tested, including free self-tests.

June 27, 2022 By Trent Straube

Monday, June 27, marks National HIV Testing Day (#HIVTestingDay and #NHTD) 2022. Knowing your HIV status is a vital step in both taking care of your own health and preventing HIV transmission, hence this year's theme: "HIV Testing Is Self-Care."

The Centers for Disease Control reports that HIV testing fell steeply during the COVID-19 pandemic, as many people avoided health facilities and services were curtailed.

But one method of testing that became more popular during the pandemic is self-testing. As HIV.gov explains, "Taking the test is taking care of you." (Watch the video above to learn more (or check it out on YouTube.).

#DYK? June 27 is National #HIV Testing Day (#NHTD). Pharmacists and pharmacies play a vital role in helping end the #HIVEpidemic. Learn how @Walgreens and @cvspharmacy will be providing testing around NHTD in the blog:https://t.co/1mby0or9nD

— HIV.gov (@HIVGov) June 24, 2022

As the POZ Basics on HIV Testing explains:

> "If you think you might have been exposed to HIV, it's important to get tested promptly. If you test positive, starting antiretroviral treatment quickly will minimize damage to your immune system and reduce the risk of transmitting the virus to others.

> “According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) there are about 1.2 million people living with HIV in the United States. The CDC estimates that around 14% of people with HIV do not know they carry the virus, and nearly 40% of new HIV infections are transmitted by people who don’t know their status.”

Put another way, about 1 in 8 people with HIV don’t know their status. Once you’re aware of your status, you can take meds and suppress the virus. Not only does this lead to better health for you, but it also prevents you from transmitting HIV sexually, a fact referred to as Undetectable Equals Untransmittable, or U=U.

Taking an #HIV test is taking care of you!

Did you know that HIV testing is fast, free, and confidential?

Learn more: https://t.co/bDlneTjumo #StopHIVTogether #HIVTesting pic.twitter.com/TgFuBDlpzY

— CDC HIV (@CDC_HIV) June 24, 2022

“Knowledge of status is the gateway to engaging in prevention or treatment services that enable individuals, regardless of their status, to live a long and healthy life,” explained Harold J. Phillips, MRP, director of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy, in a recent HIV.gov blog post.

Phillips is also the chief operating officer of the Ending the HIV Epidemic in the United States initiative. Launched in 2019 by President Donald Trump, the plan aims to lower new HIV rates by 75% by 2025 and by 90% by 2030. This would amount to fewer than 3,000 HIV cases a year. “Reducing new infections to this level,” according to the initiative, “would essentially mean that HIV transmissions would be rare and meet the definition of ending the epidemic.”

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The Ending the HIV Epidemic initiative is built upon four key strategies: diagnose, treat, prevent, and respond to HIV. It involves investing federal funding and resources in programs such as Rapid Start and PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) in 57 key jurisdictions that together account for 50% of new HIV cases.

Similarly, the National HIV/AIDS Strategy, recently updated for 2022–2025, also aims to reduce new HIV infections by 75% by 2025 and by 90% by 2030 but lays out different objectives and strategies for reaching those targets. To learn more, see "What's New in the Updated National HIV/AIDS Strategy?"

Boosting access to HIV testing remains a cornerstone to both national efforts. What's more, many independent programs support those goals. For example, the Kaiser Family Foundation's Greater Than AIDS initiative has teamed up with Walgreens in more than 250 cities to offer free HIV testing on June 27. A list of participating Walgreens can be found on GreaterThan.org.

CVS pharmacies, in partnership with Gilead Sciences, will offer free testing June 29 to July 13 in New York, Miami, Orlando, Atlanta and Houston.

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A post shared by CVS Health (@cvshealth)

For more testing options, visit the HIV Services Locator on HIV.gov, which lists self-testing options in addition to information about PrEP, Ryan White HIV Care and tests for sexually transmitted infections.

To learn more about HIV testing, including the differences between antibody tests and nucleic acid tests as well as details about anonymous and confidential testing, visit the POZ Basics on HIV Testing.

And for a collection of related articles, click #HIV Testing. You'll find articles such as "Steep but Deceptive Drop in HIV Diagnoses in 2020," "California Requires Health Plans to Cover At-Home Tests for HIV and STIs," "Are HIV Home Tests the Wave of the Future?" and "When Should Youth Get Tested for HIV and Start PrEP?"

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