

Rising HIV Cases in Chicago Prompt Prevention Efforts to Hit the Street

Of 818 new HIV cases in Chicago in 2024, half were among Latinos. Street medicine may reach marginalized communities.

July 2, 2026 By Eva Lorenz

HIV cases are on the rise in Chicago, particularly among [Latinos](#). From 2022 to 2024, the total number of reported HIV cases in [Chicago](#) grew by 29%, and of the 818 new cases in 2024, half were among Latinos.

“Some of the best HIV prevention programs in the world exist in Chicago, and yet, despite having the tools to prevent death from AIDS, the tools to prevent new infections from HIV, we’re seeing a rise in new cases,” [Benjamin Young](#), MD, PhD, an infectious disease specialist who has advised HIV efforts for the Obama and Trump administrations, told Chicago’s WGN news. “So this says that it’s not a matter of science or medicines, it’s a matter of access, a matter of policy, a matter of implementation.”

In response to the increase in diagnoses, HIV health care organizations and advocates are pouring resources into [prevention](#) efforts by taking long-term HIV care to the streets of Chicago this summer.

“HIV medicine and [street medicine](#) medical teams have a long history of trying to help the most marginalized people, and so the efforts today about bringing HIV medicine to street medicine is about welding those two philosophically aligned groups to do something different and ultimately to expand the scope of what street medicine can achieve,” [Young told WGN9](#).

To encourage testing, the Chicago street medicine team of the University of Chicago will be offering rapid [HIV tests](#) in the field. Vida/SIDA, an organization in Chicago that has been focused on HIV prevention in Latino communities for nearly 40 years, led this year’s Chicago [Pride](#) Parade, emphasizing the importance of connecting vulnerable populations to HIV care.



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In 2023, Latinos were 72% more likely than the general population to be diagnosed with HIV, according to the [Office of Minority Health](#). In the same year, Latinos above age 13 were 38% more likely to have an [AIDS](#) diagnosis.

Every October, HIV advocates and health care service organizations come together to promote [National Latino AIDS Awareness Day \(NLAAD\)](#).

“In 2025, NLAAD centers its efforts on HIV testing, recognizing it as a critical step in ending the epidemic,” [wrote the awareness day organizers in a press statement](#) for last year’s events, which focused on the importance of getting tested for HIV. “An estimated 170,000 people in the United States are living with HIV and unaware of their status. This gap in diagnosis delays access to lifesaving treatment and increases the risk of unknowingly transmitting the virus. By promoting testing, NLAAD aims to raise awareness, reduce stigma and empower individuals to take control of their health.”