

NEW JERSEY AIDS/HIV/STD HOTLINE

PRESS RELEASE
November 2019

Community by Community: Bringing an End to HIV and AIDS World AIDS Day 2019

(Newark, NJ) – Since 1988, December 1st has been recognized as an international day of solidarity; supporting those living with HIV while also remembering those who have lost their battle to this devastating epidemic. On World AIDS Day, we celebrate achieved milestones in HIV prevention, care and treatment; such milestones have improved health outcomes for people living with HIV as well as protected others from contracting HIV. With approximately 37.9 million people living with HIV and AIDS around the world¹, the time is now to stand against HIV-related stigma and discrimination which have no place in our countries, communities, homes, and workplaces.

Call to Action: Knowing your HIV status gives you powerful information to help you take steps to keep you and your partner healthy. Everyone between the ages of 13 and 65 should get tested for HIV at least once as part of routine health care. People at [high risk](#) for HIV should get tested more frequently. **“No HIV test can detect HIV immediately after infection. If you think you’ve been exposed to HIV in the last 72 hours, talk to your health care provider about [post-exposure prophylaxis \(PEP\)](#), right away.”²**

This year’s World AIDS Day theme, *Ending the HIV/AIDS Epidemic: Community by Community*, echoes recent initiatives put forth by both the [U.S. Government](#) and the [State of New Jersey](#) to end the HIV epidemic within the next 10 years. It is important to recognize that we as a nation already possess the key strategies to stop new infections in America —the right data, tools, leadership, and support. We have a historic opportunity to achieve an HIV-free generation in the very near future, but it cannot be accomplished without the help of every person and every community.

We must stay focused in our fight to reduce new HIV infections, save lives, and improve the health outcomes for people living with HIV. There are roughly 1.1 million people in the United States living with HIV and AIDS and 37,801 of those people live in New Jersey³. New Jersey is committed to ending the epidemic in the state by 2025 through testing, linkage to care and treatment, and prevention. The New Jersey Department of Health has joined hundreds of other organizations in support of the [Undetectable = Untransmittable \(U=U\) campaign](#) which encourages people living with HIV to achieve an undetectable viral load by staying in HIV care and treatment, in turn preventing HIV transmission to sexual partners.

There is still much to accomplish as we move closer to ending the HIV epidemic in our nation and state. Many people living with HIV are unaware of their positive status (have HIV), putting their health and the health of others at risk. It is not only important to know your own status, but also the HIV status of your sexual partner(s). Testing is the only way to be sure of one’s HIV status since you must NOT rely on

¹ HHS. [Global Stats](#).

² CDC. [HIV - Testing](#).

³ State of New Jersey. [HIV/AIDS](#).

symptoms to tell whether you or someone else has HIV. Ignoring one's HIV infection will not make it go away; delaying treatment will only allow the virus to continue to harm your immune system, eventually leading to life-threatening health outcomes such as AIDS. Although there is no cure for HIV, treatment does work if a person commits to staying in medical care throughout his or her lifetime. If HIV treatment is stopped at any point, the virus will progress in the body.

Testing can also serve as a gateway to prevention services for those who are HIV-negative. [PrEP](#) (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis), also known as Truvada, and PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis) are HIV medicines taken to prevent HIV infection. These prescribed prevention resources have been proven to significantly reduce HIV infection, if used according to the directions. Talk to your health care provider about whether these resources are right for you.

Many New Jersey communities and organizations will be hosting events to commemorate World AIDS Day on Sunday, December 1st. For more information and/or event listings, visit [NJ Department of Health](#), [World AIDS Day](#), [HIV.gov](#), [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), and [AIDSinfo](#).

New Jersey offers free HIV and other STI services to all state residents via the hotline. Knowing who to call for resources and information is the first step in ending the HIV epidemic in New Jersey. The hotline is staffed by health professionals (doctors, nurses, and pharmacists) available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to provide free, confidential help via phone at 1-800-624-2377, text/email at 8006242377@njpies.org, or [chat here](#).

- Referrals for testing sites and other related services
- HIV, STI and hepatitis prevention and treatment information
- Side effects from medicines used to treat HIV and other sexually transmitted infections
- Referrals to PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) and PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis) services
- Counseling and treatment locations
- Partner notification
- ADDP

Connect with the NJ AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)

Observance Day hashtags: #WorldAIDSDay, #WAD2019, #ROCKTHERIBBON #NJEndsHIV2025 #UEqualsU

New Jersey AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline

Healthcare professionals (doctors, nurses and pharmacists) provide telephone consultation for people seeking information about HIV/AIDS, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), and other sexually transmitted infections (STI) including hepatitis. Callers receive information tailored to their needs; discussion about prevention, referrals for testing sites and other related services, counseling and testing locations, and information on treatment and adverse reactions to medications. The hotline is administered by the New Jersey Poison Control Center and funded by the New Jersey Department of Health, Division of HIV, STD, and TB services.

Rutgers New Jersey Medical School

Founded in 1954, Rutgers New Jersey Medical School is the oldest school of medicine in the state. Today it is part of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and graduates approximately 170 physicians a year. In addition to providing the MD degree, the school offers MD/PhD, MD/MPH and MD/MBA degrees through collaborations with other institutions of higher education. Dedicated to excellence in education, research, clinical care and community outreach, the medical school comprises 20 academic departments and works with



New Jersey Medical School

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several healthcare partners, including its principal teaching hospital, University Hospital. Its faculty consists of numerous world-renowned scientists and many of the region's "top doctors." Home to the nation's oldest student-run clinic, New Jersey Medical School hosts more than 50 centers and institutes, including the Public Health Research Institute Center, the Global Tuberculosis Institute and the Neurological Institute of New Jersey. For more information please visit: njms.rutgers.edu.

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