

NEW JERSEY AIDS/HIV/STD HOTLINE

PRESS RELEASE

Aging with HIV

(New Jersey) – Living with HIV today is very different than living with HIV 10 years ago. So much has changed in prevention, care, and treatment for the better. Now that HIV can be controlled with medicine (called antiretroviral therapy/ART), people are less likely to die from HIV-related infections. Newer, more effective medicines also prevent passing the virus to partners during sex while keeping an [undetectable viral load](#). HIV has changed from a fatal disease to a manageable, chronic illness.

People with HIV are living longer, healthier lives. The number of older adults (age 50 and older) living with HIV is increasing. Some people were diagnosed young and have been living with HIV for years, while others were diagnosed with HIV later in life. Although thousands of older adults find out they have HIV each year, there are still many who are living with HIV and don't know it.

Getting older comes with its own health complications, further complicating HIV treatment plans for people with HIV. Older adults have increased rates of age-related illnesses and conditions such as heart disease, certain cancers, bone fractures, loss of muscle mass, dementia, and kidney disease. Combining HIV medicines with other medicines for age-related conditions may cause serious drug interactions and side effects.

If you're experiencing side effects from medicines used to treat HIV or other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), contact your medical provider or the health professionals at the NJ AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline. The hotline is available 24/7: Call: 1-800-624-2377; [Chat Here](#)

Although aging adults visit their medical providers more often, they may feel more stigmatized when talking about their sexual preferences and activities. Providers may be less likely to test older adults for HIV and other STIs and ask about their current or past drug. Like young people, older adults are less likely to use condoms while having sex because they underestimate their risk of infection.

Breaking stigmas around aging, drug use, and sexual preferences and activities will encourage open and honest conversations between patients and health providers. Many older adults have active sex lives, but don't know the options available for HIV and STI prevention, testing, and treatment. Older adults who do not have HIV (HIV-negative) should talk to their medical providers about proven prevention options like [PrEP \(pre-exposure prophylaxis\)](#) and [PEP \(post-exposure prophylaxis\)](#) to reduce new HIV infections.

Get Tested. Start Treatment. Stop HIV

New Jersey AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline

New Jersey offers free HIV and other STI (Sexually Transmitted Infection) services to anyone living in the state. The hotline's medical staff (doctors, nurses, and pharmacists) are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to assist callers looking for information or free sexual health services including referrals to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) services. Calls to the hotline are free and private (confidential).

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 at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School and funded by the New Jersey Department of Health, Division of HIV, STD, and TB services. For more information, visit call 1-800-624-2377, [chat here](#), or visit njhivstdline.org.

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 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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