

NEW JERSEY AIDS/HIV/STD HOTLINE

PRESS RELEASE

April 2017

Youth HIV and AIDS DAY April 10, 2017

(Newark, NJ) – National Youth HIV & AIDS Awareness Day (NYHAAD), April 10, 2017 serves as an important opportunity to focus our attention on the continued concern that young people account for a significant number of new HIV infections each year both nationally and in New Jersey. Black and Hispanic/Latino young men who have sex with men (YMSM) and transgender youth, ages 13-29, remain at highest risk for HIV infection. “Today’s young people are the first generation who have never known a world without HIV and AIDS.”¹

We are all at risk for getting HIV, but certain risk factors significantly increase the chance of becoming HIV-positive. For YMSM, factors like stigma, risky sexual behaviors, isolation and lack of support, high HIV prevalence, substance use, high STD rates and unknown HIV status play a significant role in new HIV infection. Linking YMSM to medical care is a critical step in preventing new infections, thereby stopping the spread of HIV in this population. Undiagnosed infections continue to fuel the epidemic; many people with HIV do not know they are HIV positive. By not getting medical treatment, they are unknowingly spreading the HIV to others.

Testing is the only way to know for sure. You cannot rely on symptoms to know if you are HIV-positive. Many people infected with the virus may not show any symptoms for years. HIV testing has never been quicker and easier than it is today. Rapid HIV testing was designed to produce results in less than an hour.

Many New Jersey agencies provide free outreach and support services (including testing, linkage to treatment and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to YMSM. Contact the healthcare professionals at the New Jersey AIDS/HIV/STD hotline for more information; call 1-800-624-2377, text/email at 8006242377@njpies.org, or chat www.njhivstdline.org

There is now a prescription HIV prevention option available, [pre-exposure prophylaxis \(PrEP\)](#), to those at high risk of infection. This medicine must be prescribed by a healthcare professional; it cannot be bought over-the-counter. According to the CDC, “PrEP is for people without HIV who are at very high risk for getting it from sex or injection drug use.”² Studies have shown that PrEP is very effective when used according to the directions; one pill taken every day.³ By adding another layer of protection, condoms, it is found to be even more effective; condoms must be used correctly, every time a person is involved in sexual

¹ National Youth HIV and AIDS Day. [NYHAAD Campaign Toolkit](#). Accessed April 5, 2017.

² CDC. [Daily pill can prevent HIV](#). December 2015.

³ CDC. [PrEP information sheet](#). Accessed April 5, 2017.

contact.⁴ “Daily PrEP use can lower the risk of getting HIV from sex by more than 90% and from injection drug use by more than 70%.”⁵

KNOW YOUR HIV STATUS – GET OUT & GET TESTED

You may also contact the hotline for more information about HIV, STDs, hepatitis, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), and/or post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). Calls are free and confidential. Services are available 24 hours a day, seven (7) days a week, every day of the year.

- Referrals for testing sites and other related services
- HIV/AIDS, STD and hepatitis prevention information
- HIV counseling and treatment locations
- HIV treatment information

New Jersey AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline

Healthcare professionals provide telephone consultation for people seeking information about HIV/AIDS, and other sexually transmitted diseases 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’s services are provided by the staff at the hotline, nurses, pharmacists and physicians, administered by the New Jersey Poison Center and funded by the New Jersey Department of Health, Division of HIV, STD, and TB services.

About Rutgers

Established in 1766, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, is America’s eighth oldest institution of higher learning and one of the nation’s premier public research universities. Serving more than 65,000 students on campuses, centers, institutes and other locations throughout the state, Rutgers is the only public university in New Jersey that is a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities.

Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS) is the health care education, research, and clinical division of Rutgers University, comprising nine schools and their attendant faculty practices, centers, institutes and clinics; New Jersey’s leading comprehensive cancer care center; and New Jersey’s largest behavioral health care network.

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⁴ CDC. [Are you ready for PrEP?](#) Accessed April 5, 2017.

⁵ CDC. [PrEP](#). December 5, 2016.