

NEW JERSEY AIDS/HIV/STD HOTLINE

PRESS RELEASE

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What Every Woman Should Know about HIV and AIDS

(Newark, NJ) – Women’s History Month is about the remembrance and celebration of women around the world. This annual observance provides the opportunity to acknowledge that HIV and AIDS remain a global health concern for women. Although everyone is at risk for HIV regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, some groups (populations) are more affected by HIV than others. Women have been highly impacted by HIV and AIDS in the U.S. as well as in New Jersey. Health professionals at the NJ AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline stress the importance of highlighting sexual health education for women.

- Know your risk
 - According to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), New Jersey has one of the highest proportions of HIV infection occurring in females with Asbury Park, East Orange, Newark, Irvington, Orange, and Atlantic City having the highest rates of women living with HIV/AIDS in the state. Women of color, particularly African Americans, have been especially hard hit and represent 57% of HIV infections among women, followed by Hispanic women (30%). Many women with HIV/AIDS face limited access to health care and experience disparities in receipt of care and treatment.¹
- Prevent HIV Infection
 - Using [male](#) or [female](#) condoms correctly and consistently every time you have sex greatly decreases your risk for HIV infection.
 - Limit your number of sexual partners.
 - Never share needles or drug works (i.e. cookers, cotton, or water).
 - Although there is still no cure for HIV/AIDS, medicines are now available to greatly reduce your risk for getting HIV when taken as directed. Talk to your doctor.
 - PrEP ([pre-exposure prophylaxis](#)) should be taken daily by anyone who is at very high risk for contracting HIV either through sex or injecting drugs.
 - PEP ([post-exposure prophylaxis](#)) is an HIV medicine that should only be used in emergency situations when you think you may have been exposed to HIV within the last 3 days (72 hours).
- HIV Testing and Treatment
 - You cannot rely on symptoms to tell whether you are HIV-positive. Testing is the only way to know for sure. CDC recommends that HIV testing be part of a regular healthcare routine and suggests that anyone between the ages of 13 and 64 get tested at least once a year. Those at higher risk should be tested more often.

¹ HIV/AIDS Among Women in New Jersey, 2016.

<http://www.nj.gov/health/hivstdtb/documents/factsheets/hiv/women.pdf>

- HIV testing has never been quicker and easier than it is today with the rapid HIV test. With this test, you can get your results in less than an hour.
- It is not only important to know your own HIV status, but your sexual partner's as well.
- The sooner HIV infection is found, the sooner treatment can begin. Ignoring your infection will not make it go away. HIV treatment does work, but it is a lifelong process. You can live a long, healthy life with HIV, but you must stay in treatment and get regular HIV medical care.
- Know who to call for resources and information
 - The NJ AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline is New Jersey's go-to resource for information, questions or concerns about HIV and other STIs (sexually transmitted infections), hepatitis, PrEP and PEP medications, and much more. Health professionals (doctors, nurses, and pharmacists) are 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 www.njhivstdline.org
 - Referrals for testing sites and other related services
 - HIV, STD and hepatitis prevention and treatment information
 - Counseling and treatment locations
 - Partner notification
 - ADDP

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 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 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.

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.