



National HIV Testing Day Guidance



ABOUT

NATIONAL HIV TESTING DAY

Since 1995, National HIV Testing Day has taken place on June 27th. This year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has composed the theme “My Test, My Way,” with the message that taking charge of your sexual health includes being screened for HIV. Knowing your status is a powerful tool in staying healthy and today, there are more options than ever before to be tested for HIV.

HIV TESTING DAY

IN LOUISIANA

The Louisiana Department of Health, Bureau of Infectious Diseases, STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program reported in the 2018 STD/HIV Surveillance Report that 21,723 persons were living with HIV all across Louisiana. The New Orleans region had the highest number of new HIV diagnoses and the Baton Rouge region had the highest rate of new HIV diagnoses in 2018 out of all nine public health regions. Of these new diagnoses, 26% were women and 70% were Black. In 2018, gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (GBM), accounted for 57% of HIV diagnoses.

It is important to point out that new diagnoses are fueled by health inequities based on lack of access to healthcare and systemic homophobia, racism, and transphobia. While we continue to battle these inequities, new diagnoses in Louisiana have gone down 20% over the past four years. Nonetheless, as we approach the 40th year that the first few cases of HIV were reported, we still have a long way to go.

TESTING OPTIONS

Many agencies and clinics in Louisiana offer a variety of HIV testing options. In Louisiana, we understand that having these options empower our citizens to test in a manner that is most comfortable to them. In the era of COVID-19, there are options to self-test at home or drive-through rapid testing. Below is a list of testing options that are offered across the state. We advise for those interested in receiving a test to call ahead to learn which testing options are offered at their local health clinic.



RAPID
TESTING



SELF-
TESTING



DRIVE-THROUGH
RAPID TESTING



LAB BASED
TESTING



VENUE-BASED
TESTING



TESTING IN CONJUNCTION
WITH COVID-TESTING

In our fight to dismantle HIV stigma, it is important to remember that people living with HIV, who take antiretroviral therapy as prescribed and stay virally suppressed, can live long, healthy lives and have no risk of sexually transmitting HIV to partners. This message is the foundation of the campaign, Undetectable = Untransmittable or U=U. You can learn more about this campaign at www.preventionaccess.org.

Lastly, this testing day, please join us in encouraging HIV testing in your community. This year, the STD/HIV/Hepatitis program is cross promoting two campaigns, *Start It! Louisiana* and *Get Loud Louisiana*, both are aimed at stopping HIV stigma and promoting HIV testing, prevention, and treatment. They also uplift the message of **Undetectable = Untransmittable**.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- **Get tested for HIV**
 - Visit LAHHUB.org/NHTD to view a full list of clinics offering HIV testing around the state.
- **Social Media Posts**
 - Downloadable graphics and sample posts are available for you to use on your social media accounts.
 - Visit LAHHUB.org/NHTD to view the creative assets available and download as needed.
- **Watch the Social Media Takeover Video series**
 - This year to honor of NHTD, SHHP will be spotlighting our community-based organizations with a social media takeover across all Louisiana Health Hub platforms. These interviews are an opportunity for viewers get an idea of what our community-based organizations do and why it is crucial for the community to be aware of their offerings.
 - These, roughly 5 minute, videos will be shared on our social media platforms (@LAHealthHub) for everyone to access. The first of these videos will be released on June 27th.
 - **Be the first to watch, comment, and share.**
- **Share the National HIV Testing Day Factsheet**
 - Download and share the National HIV Testing Day Factsheet with your family, friends, and others in your community.
 - Discuss the information on the factsheet and explore joining a Get Loud Louisiana subcommittee to help end the HIV epidemic. Visit GetLoudLouisiana.org to learn more.

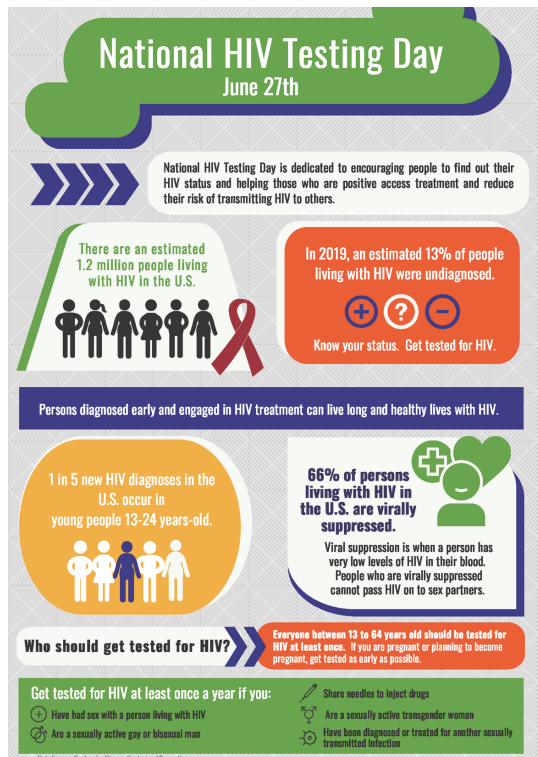
RESOURCES

SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS

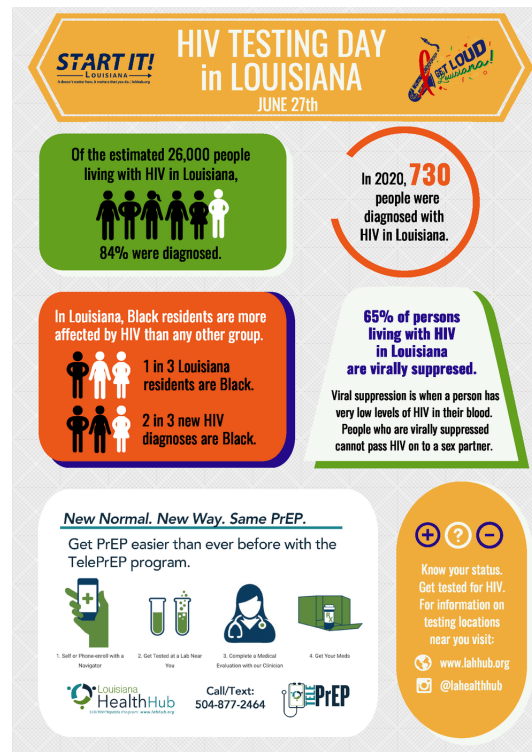


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FACT SHEETS



[\[Click here to download.\]](#)



STAY CONNECTED:



@LAHEALTHHUB

TALKING POINTS

National HIV Testing Day

- National HIV Testing Day (NHTD) is June 27th.
- National HIV Testing Day (NHTD) is a day to encourage people to get tested for HIV, know their status, and get linked to care and treatment. On this day, we unite with partners, health departments, and other organizations to raise awareness about the importance of HIV testing and early diagnosis of HIV.
- National HIV Testing Day (NHTD) is recognized all across the United States.

HIV Facts

- HIV, or Human Immunodeficiency Virus, is a virus that attacks a key part of the immune system – the T-cells or CD4 cells – which help defend the body against illness. Left untreated, HIV can destroy so many CD4 cells that the body can't fight infections and diseases anymore. When that happens, HIV can lead to an AIDS diagnosis.
- There are 3 ways for coming in contact with HIV:
 - The most common way people get HIV is through unprotected anal or vaginal sex with someone with HIV who is not aware of their status.
 - Sharing syringes or other drug preparation equipment increases risk of getting HIV.
 - HIV can be passed from mother to child during pregnancy, birth and through breastfeeding, although this risk can be almost eliminated with treatment.
- There are more options than ever to prevent the spread of HIV, including:
 - **Condoms:** When used consistently and correctly, condoms are highly effective in protecting against HIV, as well as many other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Condoms are also the only method of protection that prevents both pregnancy and disease. Like male condoms, female condoms are another barrier method of protection. Female condoms are inserted into the vagina.
 - **PrEP:** This once a day pill is available by prescription for people who do not have HIV and want added protection. When taken as prescribed, PrEP is highly effective at preventing HIV. Studies show it is more than 99 percent effective at preventing sexual transmission, and more than 74 percent effective from drug injection transmission.*
 - **Treatment as Prevention:** In addition to improving health, antiretrovirals (ARVs), the prescription medications used to treat HIV, also prevent the spread of the virus to others by lowering the amount of virus in the body, often to levels undetectable by standard lab tests. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) there is "effectively no risk" of sexual transmission to others when the viral load is undetectable. Undetectable = Untransmittable.
 - **Sterile injection equipment:** Needle-exchange programs in many cities offer free, clean syringes and provide a safe means of disposal of used ones. Only use syringes that come from a reliable source. [Click here to find drug treatment programs near you.](#)

* CDC, [HIV Basics](#), [PrEP](#). December 2019.

TALKING POINTS

HIV Testing

- Everyone should know their HIV status. The only way to do that is by getting a test. Today, there are more ways to get tested for HIV than ever before. Visit LouisianaHealthHub.org to learn more.
- HIV testing is recommended as a part of routine health care. Be sure to speak with your healthcare provider to ensure this topic is covered.
- At-home HIV test kits are a great way to learn your HIV status on your own time and in your own space. It is an ideal option as we are progressing through the COVID-19 pandemic. At-home test kits may be purchased at many drug stores or you may check with your local healthcare agency.

Louisiana Statistics

- The Louisiana Department of Health, Bureau of Infectious Diseases, STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program reported in the 2018 STD/HIV Surveillance Report that 21,723 persons were living with HIV all across Louisiana.
- In 2020, 730 people were diagnosed with HIV in Louisiana.
- In Louisiana, Black residents are more affected by HIV than any other racial group. 2 in 3 new HIV diagnoses are Black.
- In Louisiana, 65% of persons living with HIV are virally suppressed.
 - Viral suppression is when a person has very low levels of HIV in their blood. People who are virally suppressed cannot pass HIV on to a sex partner.
- New diagnoses in Louisiana have gone down 20% over the past four years. Nonetheless, as we recognize the 40th year that the first few cases of HIV were reported, we still have a long way to go to ending the HIV epidemic.

* CDC, [HIV Basics, PrEP](#). December 2019.