Coffee Talk

Sip, test and cruise

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A dishy brew of double-decaf and AIDS awareness, West Hollywood's WeHo Lounge is breaking grounds as the first one-stop HIV testing/espresso bar. The java joint, an outgrowth of AIDS Healthcare Foundation's TREATMENT=LIFE program, serves up coffee and cruising, while doling out prevention and treatment pamphlets and HIV testing/counseling, all with support from the LA Health Department. "The idea is to bring HIV out of the closet and put it in people's faces," said the Foundation's Rick Reidy. Tucked between Santa Monica Boulevard's trendiest gay discos, WeHo benefits from "the most gay male foot traffic in America," according to Reidy. Soon after its June launch, E! Entertainment's *Gossip Show* was shot there, and the lounge's weekly "Cocktail Hour" rap group has spurred plans for a cable-access show. The hotspot offers a free cup of joe for 10 condom wrappers. Future AIDS outreach projects in local 'hoods will be guided by demographics. "If we want to attract African-American women, a cute coffee show may not be the way," Reidy says.

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