National Asian & Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day 2022

This #APIMay19, do your part to combat HIV stigma in Asian and Pacific Islander communities. Here's how.

May 19, 2022 By Trent Straube

Thursday, May 19, marks National Asian & Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (#APIMay19) 2022. Although Asian Americans are not one of the main population groups disproportionately affected by HIV, the awareness day offers a chance to highlight education, prevention and treatment efforts in Asian communities as well as the unique challenges they face in fighting stigma and dealing with related health issues.

For example, compared with other ethnic groups, Asians and Pacific Islanders (API) are less likely to be taking PrEP, or pre-exposure prophylaxis, the pills and injections that prevent HIV. What's more, in recent years, especially since COVID-19, Asians and Pacific Islanders have experienced increased racism and health inequities.

> How can we prevent HIV in Asian and Pacific Islander communities? We can start talking about HIV prevention options like condoms and PrEP, about testing, and about medicines that treat HIV: https://t.co/KKXuSXwAPj. #NAPIHAAD #APIMay19 #StartTalkingHIV pic.twitter.com/FQ40ptEjCI
>
> — NMAC (@NMACCommunity) May 18, 2022

#APIMay19 is organized by the San Francisco Community Health Center. The day was formerly referred to as #NAPIHAAD. Search both hashtags on social media for events in your neighorhood

and to find awareness campaigns like those embedded in this article.

In honor of #APIMay19, our next Ending the #HIV Epidemic Regional Learning Collaborative on Tuesday, May 24 from 10 AM - 11:30 AM PT will discuss strategies and approaches to tackle HIV in Asian and Pacific Islander communities! Register Now: https://t.co/c4QF9ZzHAE #NAPIHAAD pic.twitter.com/PE62IpP973

— UCLA CHIPTS (@CHIPTS) May 16, 2022

In 2019, Asians made up about 6% of the U.S. population and accounted for nearly 1.5% of people living with HIV . That same year, according to estimates by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there were about 34,800 new HIV diagnoses. Of those, about 550 were among Asians (overall, close to 1.2 million people in the Unites States are living with HIV; about 87% of them know their status).

However, the API community is the fastest-growing U.S. minority community. Writing in an HIV.gov blog, Lance Toma, chief executive officer of the San Francisco Community Health Center, adds that one of the challenges in HIV prevention and awareness is the “silence around sexual health, queer sexual orientation and gender identity in API communities—the same is true for HIV. Adding to the stigma, members of the API community face familial shame, discrimination and other barriers when it comes to accessing HIV testing, prevention, treatment and care. The work to combat and improve these barriers is complex, heightened by our non-monolithic cultural identity, explicit distinctions and different languages—all of which present unique challenges.”

We can help #StopHIVStigma in Asian and Pacific Islander communities by being intentional and thoughtful in how we talk about people, health, and

experiences.

Learn how you can do your part: https://t.co/j3me2vYGPS#NAPIHAAD#APIMay19 #StopHIVTogether pic.twitter.com/yiEKFHC41y — NCDHHS (@ncdhhs) May 18, 2022

CDC.gov offers free sharable graphics and guides on how to talk about HIV while avoiding stigma. The site also provides sample texts of social media posts to raise awareness on APIMay19. For example, you can copy and paste the following posts:

> May 19 is National Asian & Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, a day to combat stigma in Asian and Pacific Islander communities. When we reduce HIV stigma and promote prevention, testing, and treatment, we can #StopHIVTogether. https://bit.ly/3MyVDYs #NAPIHAAD #APIMay19

> We can help #StopHIVStigma in Asian and Pacific Islander communities by being intentional and thoughtful in how we talk about people, health, and experiences. Learn how you can do your part: https://bit.ly/3vopMns. #NAPIHAAD #APIMay19 #StopHIVTogether

> Health care providers: You can help Asian & Pacific Islander communities stay healthy by providing robust HIV screening, prevention, and treatment services. Visit #HIVNexus for free CDC resources for your practice and patients: https://bit.ly/3OLOsOi. #NAPIHAAD #StopHIVTogether

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can #StopHIVTogether. https://t.co/d4DcFWhrLU #HIV #NAPIHAAD #APIMay19 pic.twitter.com/z9JAVir4ZX

— MAOofAlabama (@MAOofAlabama) May 16, 2022

To learn more about other HIV awareness days, including a calendar you can download and print, visit "2022 HIV/AIDS Awareness Days."

And for a related insight, check out the writings of NMAC executive director Paul Kawata, a self-described "old Asian Queen who has spent decades writing about my experiences surviving an epidemic." His latest POZ blog post focuses on #APIMay19 and is titled "Picking Strawberries."

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