National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day 2023

Black Americans represent 42% of new HIV cases but only 14% of the U.S. population. Amid challenges, progress has been made.

February 7, 2023 By Trent Straube

Tuesday, February 7, marks National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NBHAAD) 2023. It's an annual day to raise awareness of the racial disparities in the HIV epidemic, to promote HIV prevention, testing and treatment and to address the challenges—and successes—in efforts to end HIV among African Americans.

In 2020, Black Americans represented 42% of new HIV diagnoses while making up only 14% of the U.S. population, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) presented on AIDSVu.org's "Deeper Look: HIV in Black Communities." This means that 12,824 Black individuals tested HIV positive in 2020. When looking at everyone living with HIV that year in the United States, 40% of them were African American.

> You have the power to take charge of your HIV status on your time, in your space. This National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, learn more about HIV self-tests: https://t.co/d1FKx0nuFk. #NBHAAD #StopHIVTogether pic.twitter.com/ebEU5EbLIt
>
> — American Sexual Health Association (@InfoASHA) February 7, 2023

You can find virtual and in-person events for the awareness day by searching #NBHAAD on social media and visiting NBHAAD.org. Sample posts from social media are embedded throughout this

article. The team at United We Rise has also compiled some event on the website EveryBlackBody.org.

“Black people continue to face social and structural barriers, including racism, discrimination, homophobia, HIV stigma, medical mistrust and limited access to high-quality health care that continue to prevent Black individuals with HIV from seeking care and treatment,” wrote Laura Cheever, MD, ScM, associate administrator for the HIV/AIDS Bureau at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), which is part of the Department of Health and Human Services. HRSA oversees the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP), which provides federal funds for HIV care and services.

“[RWHAP] is working to address these barriers and encourage the development of safe and supportive health services for people with HIV,” wrote Cheever on HIV.gov in a post to commemorate NBHAAD.

The program has seen success in getting clients in care and on treatment. “Nearly half of the more than 576,000 RWHAP clients we serve are Black/African American,” Cheever wrote. “In 2021, a record-breaking 87.2% of our Black/African American RWHAP clients receiving medical care were virally suppressed, which means we continue to close the disparity gap from 63.3% virally suppressed in 2010. When people are virally suppressed, it means they can live a healthier life, and cannot sexually transmit HIV.”

Cheever is referring to a fact most commonly known as Undetectable Equals Untransmittable, or U=U.

https://t.co/yA4Qw8Mpph - Use our ’HIV/AIDS Prevention Research in Black/African American Communities’ booklet to:

 Advocate for services and funding

 Write grants

 Develop new or modify existing HIV prevention programs#NBHAAD pic.twitter.com/QBUD4JtazQ

— CAPS, UCSF (@UCSFCAPS) February 6, 2023

Challenges also exist when it comes to HIV prevention among Black Americans, notably in the uptake of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), the daily pills and long-acting injectables that HIV-negative people take to lower their risk of contracting the virus. AIDSVu.org, which creates sharable graphics and interactive maps based on HIV data, takes a look at PrEP use in Black communities. AIDSVu writes:

> "In 2021, Black people made up only 14% of PrEP users, despite accounting for 42% of new HIV diagnoses.
>
> "One measure of the relative need for PrEP in a population is the PrEP-to-Need Ratio (PnR). This is the ratio of the number of PrEP users to the number of people newly diagnosed with HIV. Overall, despite a consistent increase in PrEP use since 2012 among all groups, the gap in PrEP equity between Black Americans and white Americans continues to widen. In 2021, The PnR among Black people was eight times lower than for white people, demonstrating a higher unmet need for PrEP in the Black community.
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> "These disparities also vary by region. In all U.S. regions in 2021, Black people had a higher unmet need for PrEP than white people. In the Northeast, for example, the PrEP-to-Need Ratio among Black people (PnR: 4.5) was over 10 times lower than among white people (PnR: 47).
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> "These disparities in PrEP use mirror broader HIV-related health trends in Black communities. Across multiple metrics—prevalence, new diagnoses, PrEP equity, and social determinants of health—there is a clear pattern of poorer health outcomes in Black communities. There is much more to be done to address these disparities."

Today is National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, a day to acknowledge progress in HIV prevention and care among Black people while recognizing the work still needed. To #StopHIVTogether, we must address HIV stigma and barriers. https://t.co/7eihvYlJNe #NBHAAD pic.twitter.com/Rg6wdTFYsx

— Francys Johnson (@francysjohnson) February 7, 2023

The CDC makes available a number of NBHAAD resources on HIV.gov, including sharable graphics for the public, campaigns and information on HIV self-testing and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) as HIV prevention. More data are available on the CDC's page "HIV and African American People."

To learn more about other HIV awareness days, including a calendar you can download and print, visit "2023 HIV/AIDS Awareness Days." And for more background on HIV among Black Americans and other population groups, visit the POZ Basics on HIV and AIDS.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/national-black-hivaids-awareness-day-2023