



Stomp the Noise: Free HIV and STI Testing Event This Week in Atlanta

Plus: South Carolina's health department will offer free HIV and STI tests on National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, February 7.

February 3, 2025 By [Trent Straube](#)

Health equity for Black Americans and other minorities may be under attack from the new Trump administration, but local and state service providers continue to offer free testing for [HIV](#) and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

[AvitaCare Atlanta](#) and partner MedCura Health are offering free, confidential STI and [HIV testing](#) through Friday, February 7, at several of their locations as part of their event Stomp the Noise: Be Fearless. Get Tested. Visit AvitaCareAtlanta.com/be-fearless for locations and registration.



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“In 2025, there’s still large amounts of stigma,” Jewel Sawyer, DMSc, MSHS, an infectious disease physician assistant at Avita Care Atlanta, [told Atlanta News First](#). (Watch the segment above.) “We’re not talking about proper education, how to access preventative screening and testing. So we really want to get the word out to come in and get tested, know your status and empower yourself in your health.”

Sawyer adds that confusion surrounds many aspects of HIV. People often wonder, she says, “Now that I’ve been diagnosed, what happens? What’s my long-term outlook? My health outcomes? And how can I be educated to have a patient-provider relationship to take care of my health?”



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[Georgia](#) has some of the highest HIV rates in the country. In fact, the state ranks fourth in total number of HIV cases, following Florida, California and Texas, according to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Atlanta also sees high HIV rates; an estimated 43,257 residents were living with HIV in 2022 and nearly 70% of them were Black, [according to AIDSvu.org](#), an interactive site that maps and visualizes HIV data on communities across the nation.

South Carolina also has higher-than-average rates of HIV. On Friday, February 7, the South Carolina Department of Public Health will offer free HIV and STI testing at public health clinics across the state. Click here for a list or call [855-472-3432](#).

The free testing coincides with National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, marked each February 7. In South Carolina, about 61% percent of people living with HIV are Black, [according to AIDSvu.org](#).

Knowing your HIV status is important. As the [POZ Basics on HIV Testing](#) page points out, people who test positive and start antiretroviral treatment quickly can minimize damage to their immune system. Folks on HIV meds experience slower disease progression, enjoy better overall health and are less likely to develop opportunistic illnesses. What's more, people with an undetectable viral load don't transmit HIV to others through sex (dubbed treatment as prevention, or [Undetectable Equals Untransmittable](#), or U=U).

According to CDC about 1.2 million people are living with HIV in the United States. The CDC estimates that around 14% of people with HIV do not know they have the virus, and nearly 40% of new HIV infections are transmitted by people who don't know their status.



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[Click here](#) to learn more about 2025 HIV and AIDS awareness days, and [click here](#) for a printable poster.