The Importance of Knowing Your HIV Status

Getting tested for HIV is vital to receiving the health care you deserve.

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June 27 was National HIV Testing Day, a yearly occasion to encourage people to get tested for HIV and to promote HIV education, but it's an issue worth promoting each day of the year. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 1.2 million people in the United States are living with HIV, including about 161,800 people who are unaware of their status.

Getting tested for HIV is vital to receiving the health care you deserve. Many people are unaware that they are living with HIV and may be less likely to take the necessary precautions to prevent transmission. In addition, the sooner someone finds out that they are living with HIV, the sooner they are able to start treatment and have access to assistance programs to help them lower their viral load.

Everyone sexually active or anyone who uses injection drugs should be tested every 3 to 6 months.

The CDC reports that there is an increasing number of people living with HIV in rural and economically disadvantaged areas in the United States. The majority of these people are Black and Hispanic/Latino, and this disparity is likely due to social and racial inequity. Patients are also more likely to trust HIV testers and counselors who look like them or sound like them. It is important to promote more multilingual and ethnically diverse people in roles such as HIV testing.

The transgender community, particularly transgender women, are among groups that are most impacted by HIV within the United States. The transgender community is reported to be 9.2% of the population living with HIV, despite only being 0.5% of the total population in the United States. This is the result of stigma, discrimination as well as not being sufficiently reached by current HIV testing measures.

Getting tested for HIV is now easy, quick, confidential — and free. There is even an option to know your status at home with a self test.

Visit bit.ly/3eNVP8D to order an at-home testing kit today. (Para ver esta información en español, haga clic en https://bit.ly/3vrWi4T.)

It’s important to know all your options this HIV Testing Day. For more information about how we can #StopHIVTogether, visit cdc.gov/StopHIVTogether.

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