

DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT #10 SUPPORTS NATIONAL HIV TESTING DAY AND LAUNCHES A FREE CONDOM DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

June 27, 2020

June 26, 2020- June 27 is National HIV Testing Day, a day to get the facts, get tested, and get involved!

This year, an emphasis is being placed on the power of “**Knowing.**” Knowing your HIV status, knowing your risk, knowing your prevention options, and knowing your treatment options. The only true way for someone to know whether they have HIV is to be tested. According to the CDC, about 1.1 million people in the United States are living with HIV, and 1 in 7 people did not know they had it.

For people with undiagnosed HIV, testing is the first step to maintaining a healthy life and reducing the spread of HIV.

- People who test negative have more prevention tools available for them today than ever before.
- People who test positive can take HIV medicines that can keep them healthy for many years and greatly reduce their chance of passing HIV to others.

What Can You Do?

- **Get Tested.**
 - Everyone between the ages of 13 and 64 get tested for HIV at least once as part of routine health care. Those who are at a higher risk for HIV should be tested more often.
 - More than 90% of new HIV infections in the United States could be prevented by testing and diagnosing people living with HIV and making sure they receive early, ongoing treatment.
 - **Free testing is available at District Health Department #10 year-round!** – call 888-217-3904, option #2 to make an appointment at your local DHD#10 office.
- **Practice Prevention.**
 - There are more tools than ever to help prevent HIV and STIs including:
 - Limiting your number of sexual partners
 - Never share needles
 - Use condoms the right way every time you have sex; they provide an effective barrier to sexually transmitted infections
 - Talk to your doctor about your risk for HIV and consider medications like pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) which can help reduce your risk of contracting HIV.



MEDIA CONTACT

Jeannine Taylor
Public Information Officer
O: 231-876-3823
C: 231-920-4998
E: jtaylor@dhd10.org



COUNTIES SERVED:

Crawford
Kalkaska
Lake
Manistee
Mason
Mecosta
Missaukee
Newaygo
Oceana
Wexford



www.dhd10.org



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- **Get the Facts.**
 - Learn about HIV, and share this lifesaving information with family, friends and the community.
 - Tell others about the importance of making HIV testing a part of a regular health routine.
 - Knowing your HIV status gives you powerful information to help keep you and your partner healthy.

“To support prevention of HIV, as well as sexually transmitted infections overall, DHD#10 is working to remove barriers” states George Davis, RN, Clinical Health Supervisor and STD/HIV Coordinator. According to Davis, purchasing condoms can be a challenge for many who are too embarrassed to go through the checkout line at a pharmacy; for others cost is a barrier. COVID-19 has limited access to stopping by the health department to pick up condoms. As a result, DHD#10 is launching a **free condom distribution campaign** to residents of its 10 county service areas (Crawford, Kalkaska, Lake, Manistee, Mason, Mecosta, Missaukee, Newaygo, Oceana and Wexford).

“We are now offering the option of free mail-order condoms as both a convenience to our communities and an effort to reduce HIV and other sexually transmitted infections” Davis reports. The public can order on-line through the DHD10 website at www.dhd10.org/mail-order-condoms and can email questions to condoms@dhd10.org. The mail-order packet will include education on STD prevention and testing services as well as birth control services through the health department.

District Health Department #10 provides free, rapid HIV testing. This test is available year-round. Services are confidential, LGBTQ friendly, and no one will ever be denied service due to inability to pay. Call 888-217-3904, option #2 to make an appointment at your local DHD#10 office or to be transferred to a nurse if you have questions.

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