



Provider Alert National HIV Testing Day

In observance of National HIV Testing Day on June 27, 2018 the Santa Barbara County Public Health is reaching out to providers and community members to raise awareness about the importance of HIV testing and early diagnosis of HIV. The 2018 theme is "*Doing It My Way, Testing for HIV.*" Because HIV crosses the boundaries of sexual orientation, gender, age, and ethnicity, risk-based testing fails to identify many people with HIV. Therefore, Centers for Disease Control recommends HIV screening for everyone in all health care settings.

Burden of HIV/AIDS in Santa Barbara County for 2017 year end:

- 545 Residents living with HIV/AIDS
- 24 newly reported HIV infected cases of which two were simultaneously diagnosed with AIDS

Best Practices for Routine HIV Testing in Health Care Settings:

- Take a thorough sexual history for all patients as part of routine medical care
- Provide patients with information on the importance of knowing their HIV status
- Adopt policy of offering HIV testing routinely to all patients with undocumented HIV status
- Persons at high risk for HIV infection should be advised to be retested periodically and should be offered prevention counseling
- Persons at risk for Sexually Transmitted Diseases should receive comprehensive screening for other infections including: Gonorrhea, Syphilis and Chlamydia

PrEP Information for Providers

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is an HIV prevention strategy in which antiretroviral drugs are used to protect HIV-negative people from HIV infection. PrEP has the potential to prevent HIV among individuals at very high risk for becoming infected with HIV, and provides individuals and clinicians with another option for HIV prevention. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), when taken consistently, PrEP has been shown to reduce the risk of HIV infection in people who are at high risk by up to 92%.

The California Department of Public Health, Office of AIDS (CDPH/OA) and the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department supports the use of PrEP for those individuals at greatest risk of HIV exposure, including gay men and other men who have sex with men, transgender persons, persons who inject drugs, and others at high risk for

infection. PrEP medication and clinical monitoring are covered by major private insurance companies, as well as Medicare, Medi-Cal and Covered California, though cost sharing varies. Financial assistance may be available to individuals seeing PrEP, whether they have insurance or not. The [GETTING PrEPPEd](#) website by Project Inform has a summary of PrEP assistance and co-pay programs.

How can you do Your Part to Support PrEP Services

- Talk about PrEP with HIV-negative patients at ongoing risk of exposure and HIV-positive patients who may have HIV-negative partners.
- Prescribe PrEP according to clinical guidelines, see resources below.
- Add your practice to the <https://www.pleaseprepme.org/> website as a PrEP provider.

Several resources are available to clinicians prescribing or considering prescribing PrEP:

- The PrEP Clinical Consultant telephone line at (855) 448-7737 is available Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. PST.
- The Pacific AIDS Education & Training Center (PAETC) offers free technical assistance and training related to PrEP and clinical practice: www.PAETC.org, e-mail: paetcmal@ucsf.edu or telephone (415) 476-6153.

