



PRESS RELEASE

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NATIONAL HIV TESTING DAY – TEST YOUR WAY. DO IT TODAY.

(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.) - In observance of National HIV Testing Day on June 27, 2017 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. This year's theme is "*Test Your Way. Do It Today.*"

The impact of HIV/AIDS in Santa Barbara County at of the end of 2016:

- 609 Residents living with HIV/AIDS
- 30 newly reported HIV infected cases of which eight were simultaneously diagnosed with AIDS
- 20 HIV infected cases transferring care to Santa Barbara County

Because HIV crosses the boundaries of sexual orientation, gender, age, and ethnicity, CDC recommends that everyone between the ages of 13 and 64 get tested for HIV at least once as part of routine health care. People with risk factors should get tested more often.

- Men who have sex with other men
- Sex with an HIV-positive partner
- More than one sex partner
- Injection drug use
- Exchanged sex for drugs or money
- Diagnosed with or sought treatment for another sexually transmitted disease such as Gonorrhea, Syphilis and Chlamydia

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, clinicians, and HIV prevention workers 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%.

Financial assistance may be available to individuals seeing PrEP, whether they have insurance or not. The [GETTING PrEPPEd](http://www.gettingprepped.org) website by Project Inform has a summary of PrEP assistance and co-pay programs. To find a PrEP provider near you visit www.pleaseprepmo.org