



National HIV/AIDS Testing Day

CONGREGATIONAL CARE-Transparency Saves Lives



June is National HIV/AIDS Testing Day (NHTD) month, and PPGMR is here to assist your congregation and to be nonjudgmental resource for Communities of Faith. The tools provided here can assist you with caring for your congregations during National HIV/AIDS Testing Day in ways that can be simple but effective.

Below are some suggestions for becoming involved an awareness message surrounding HIV testing and education for your congregation. Start where you are most comfortable. You could:

- Include a statistic in your church bulletin
- Put pamphlets in the restrooms. *Planned Parenthood Greater Memphis Region can provide pamphlets to boost your congregational efforts. Call for details. 901-725-3014*
- Place prevention posters or materials in high traffic areas.
- Include a message in your church's social media.
- Identify a health professional in your congregation to spearhead an awareness campaign.
- Invite a guest speaker and allow them a limited time to speak during service or an evening or weekend program. *A Planned Parenthood Greater Memphis Region Educator will do this for FREE. Call to schedule. 901-725-3014.*

At **Planned Parenthood Greater Memphis Region** we're committed to supporting the health of our community. We know people often turn to their church family for information about various subjects including HIV, and we want you to be ready to help. These materials are meant as a base---put your own spin on them! Frame them in your congregations beliefs and values.

ONLINE RESOURCES

- Talking about NHTD? Use the hashtag [#NHTD](#) to share about how you're observing NHTD.
- Follow the [AIDS.gov NHTD board on Pinterest](#). 
- Make your own board to recognize the importance of HIV testing.
- Read and share the [new media declaration](#).
- Check out free CDC-designed resources: http://hivtest.cdc.gov/press_files/
- [Take Charge. Take the Test.](#) encourages African American women to be tested for HIV
- [Testing Makes Us Stronger](#) promotes HIV testing among black gay and bisexual men
- [Reasons/Razones](#) promotes HIV testing among Hispanic/Latino gay and bisexual men
- Visit the [CDC NPIN National HIV Testing Day](#) website for tools and resources to promote NHTD.



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JUST THE FACTS

Encouraging members to be proactive about HIV prevention is one of the most important things you can do to protect the health and vitality of your congregation and it's easier than ever before. These talking points can be added to a sermon, a short talk, or a planned discussion. You know your audience, so choose what will work best for you.

Should you or your members get tested? If you are sexually active or are injecting drugs with a partner of unknown HIV status, you should get tested as soon as possible.

Here's why: The survival and long-term health of people with HIV are significantly improved by beginning HIV treatment earlier. Getting tested and entering treatment sooner rather than later means that you can begin to protect your health when it matters most.

If you are HIV positive, you will be able to take the precautions necessary to protect others from becoming infected, such as consistently using condoms. Treatment can also reduce your risk of infecting others.

If you are HIV positive and pregnant, you can take medications to significantly reduce the risk of infecting your infant.

How can I get tested?

You can be tested by your physician, at a local health clinic, or on your own at home.

Conventional HIV tests, including one of the home test kits, the Access HIV-1 Test System, are sent to a laboratory for testing. It can take a week or two before the test results are available.

Today, many facilities such as **Planned Parenthood Greater Memphis Region** use rapid HIV tests that can give accurate results in as little as 20 minutes. Similarly, the OraQuick test, which can be purchased at drugstores and used at home, requires only a mouth swab and gives results in about 20 to 40 minutes.

Many states offer anonymous HIV testing. In most testing sites, counselors are available to help you understand the meaning of the test results, suggest ways you can protect yourself and others, and refer you to appropriate local resources.



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SOCIAL MEDIA

You might choose to use social media as your platform in your congregational care efforts. Below are some suggested **Facebook** posts or **Tweets**.



You might post this fact to your Facebook account:



***Did you know?** In some people, AIDS develops soon after infection with HIV. But many people do not develop symptoms for 10 to 12 years, and a few remain symptom-free for much longer. Early detection and treatment plays an important role in slowing the progression to AIDS and helps many people with HIV lead relatively normal lives.*

Here are some ways to reduce the risk of becoming infected with HIV through sexual contact that can be used in social media. Tweet these! 

- If you are sexually active, protect yourself against HIV by practicing safer sex.
- When used properly and consistently, condoms are close to 99 percent effective in preventing the transmission of HIV.
- Use protection each and every time you have sex and limit the number of sexual partners you have.
- Use only latex condoms. A dental dam—a square of latex—is recommended for oral–genital and oral–anal sex.
- Use only water-based lubricants. Latex condoms are virtually useless when combined with oil- or petroleum-based lubricants such as Vaseline or hand lotion.
- Limit the use of alcohol or recreational drugs, which can impair judgment.

This year, in celebration of National HIV Testing Day (June 27th) and in collaboration with the First Impressions REMIX Barbershop and an incredible group of HIV prevention organizations, we are launching a month of social media designed to raise awareness around HIV, disseminate education and prevention messaging, and promote the REMIX testing and education events.

The campaign is called **#27days27ways** and culminates in two events:

- Friday, June 27th, 2pm-5pm @ First Impressions REMIX: **#27days27ways Celebration**
- Saturday, June 28th, 11am-3pm @ First Impressions REMIX: **National HIV Testing Day @ REMIX**