

# December



## National Health Observances



Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

## World AIDS Day

**Sponsor:** World AIDS Day Campaign (<http://www.worldaidscampaign.org/>) 

December 1 is World AIDS Day, a global initiative to encourage countries and communities to take a stand against HIV/AIDS. The fight against HIV/AIDS can be recognized not only on World AIDS Day, but all through December and every day of the year.

AIDS is the final stage of HIV infection. It can take years for a person infected with HIV to reach this stage. One in 5 of the more than one million people living with HIV in the United States is unaware of his or her infection.

HIV is passed from one person to another by:

- Having unprotected sex (vaginal, anal, or oral) with a person who has HIV
- Sharing needles with someone who has HIV
- Breastfeeding, pregnancy, or childbirth if a mother has HIV
- Getting a transfusion of blood that has HIV, which is rare in the United States

## Get the Word Out

### Sample Media and/or Newsletter or Listserv Announcement

*Cut and paste this text into your newsletter, listserv, or press release. Add local details and quotes from your organization.*

This year, an estimated 56,300 people will be infected with HIV in the United States. One in 5 of the more than one million people living with HIV is unaware of his or her infection. This year, in recognition of World AIDS Day on December 1, **[insert organization]** encourages all citizens of **[enter state/city]** to get tested for HIV.

The only way to know for sure if you have HIV is to get tested. You could have HIV and still feel healthy. Many doctors recommend HIV testing for all teens and adults between the ages of 13 and 64.

It's especially important to get tested regularly if you are at high risk of infection. Get tested for HIV at least once a year if you:

- Have unprotected sex (sex without a condom) with someone who might have HIV.
- Have sex with men who have sex with men.
- Use drugs with needles.
- Have a sex partner who is HIV-positive.

- Have had a sexually transmitted disease (STD).

Learn more about HIV/AIDS and how to prevent this disease.

- Add details about your local activities.
- Include a quote from your organization.

For more information, visit **[insert your organization information]**. To find an HIV testing location near you, text your zip code to KNOWIT (566948) or use this online locator (<http://aids.gov/locator/>).

### Is your organization on Twitter? Send tweets.

Sample tweets: Tips to increase awareness about HIV/AIDS

The messages below are sample tweets. To send them via Twitter, click on the URL link provided after the “Tweet this message” phrase. Or, copy the message and paste it to your Twitter Stream and click post.

- Find an HIV testing center. Just enter your zip code and go:  
<http://aids.gov/locator/>. [Tweet this message:  
<http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/kZFxEp&text=Find+an+HIV+testing+center.+Just+enter+your+zip+code+and+go:+http://aids.gov/locator/> 
- Be sure. The only way to know if you have HIV is to get tested. Learn more:  
<http://1.usa.gov/jhanrM>. [Tweet this message:  
<http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/jhanrM&text=Be+sure.+The+only+way+to+know+if+you+have+HIV+is+to+get+tested.+Learn+more:> 
- Q. What is AIDS?  
A. HIV stands for human immunodeficiency virus. This is the virus that causes AIDS. Learn more: <http://1.usa.gov/uQQU8F>. [Tweet this message:  
<http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/IGiYQt&text=Q.+What+is+AIDS+A.+HIV+stands+for+human+immunodeficiency+virus.+This+is+the+virus+that+causes+AIDS.+Learn+more:> 
- Did you know? You could have HIV and still feel healthy. Many doctors recommend HIV testing for people between the ages of 13 and 64. [Tweet this message:  
<http://twitter.com/share?text=Did+you+know?+You+could+have+HIV+and+still+fe>

[el+healthy.+Many+doctors+recommend+HIV+testing+for+people+and+adults+between+the+ages+of+13+and+64.%23nho](#) [↗]

- According to @womenshealth, about 1 out of 4 Americans with HIV are women. Women are not immune. Learn more: <http://1.usa.gov/ihf9VZ>  
[Tweet this message:  
<http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/ihf9VZ&text=According+to+@womenshealth,+about+1+out+of+4+Americans+with+HIV+are+women.+Women+are+not+immune.+Learn+more:> [↗]
- Did you know? African Americans make up only 13% of the U.S., yet almost half of all new HIV infections: <http://bit.ly/kXeUBB> [Tweet this message:  
<http://twitter.com/share?url=http://bit.ly/kXeUBB&text=Did+you+know?+African+Americans+make+up+only+13+percent+of+the+U.S.,+yet+almost+half+of+all+new+HIV+infections:> [↗]

### Send e-cards

- healthfinder.gov: World AIDS Day  
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/ecards/DisplayCard.aspx?CardID=26>)
- View more E-cards (<http://healthfinder.gov/ecards/cards.aspx?jsript=1>)

### Post a Web Badge

Add this free Web badge (<http://healthfinder.gov/nho/nhoBadges.aspx#dec>) to your Web site, blog, or social networking profile to show your support for World AIDS Day.

### Get Involved

Take action to increase awareness about HIV/AIDS.

1. Partner with a local health center to offer free HIV testing at your worksite or organization.
2. Host a forum with a local public health official to discuss HIV prevention and the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS.
3. Encourage members of your organization to provide canned goods or other donations to support those living with HIV/AIDS.

- Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health, Health Problems in American Indian/Alaska Native Women: HIV/AIDS (<http://womenshealth.gov/minority/americanindian/hiv.cfm>)
- National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Aging, HIV, AIDS, and Older People (<http://www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation/Publications/hiv-aids.htm>)
- National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, HIV/AIDS (<http://www3.niaid.nih.gov/topics/HIVAIDS/>)
- National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Drug Abuse, *Drugs + HIV > Learn the Link* (<http://hiv.drugabuse.gov/>)

### Tips to Plan a National Health Observance

Each National Health Observance (NHO) presents an opportunity to educate the public, energize co-workers and community members, and promote healthy behaviors. The NHO toolkits (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/>) have the information and tools you need to get started.

Use the tips in this guide to plan a successful health promotion event.

#### Planning:

Planning is critical to the success of any outreach effort. Contact the NHO sponsoring organization several months ahead of time to request up-to-date information and materials. (Contact information for each month's sponsoring organization is provided in each toolkit).

- Consider enlisting the help of a community partner to help you plan and promote your event.
- Meet with those who will be valuable in your event coordination. To get started, sit down with potential partners, such as local businesses, local government agencies, key leaders, organizations, and media partners who share an interest in the NHO.
- Recruit volunteers, speakers, and community liaisons.
- Develop new or adapt existing materials to distribute at the event.
- Be sure to get them printed and/or copied in advance.
- Conduct a run-through before the event.

### Promoting:

Develop a publicity and media outreach plan. Designate a media contact from your planning team and make sure he or she is available to answer questions and follow up on media requests.

- Start by creating a local media list.
- Use local-access television, radio, newspaper, and community calendars to promote your event.
- Post event announcements on your Web site. Encourage your partners to post similar announcements on their Web sites.
- Send a press release.
- Engage the media by offering a spokesperson from your organization or the community.
- Post flyers or posters throughout the community: on bulletin boards at local community centers, places of worship, libraries, post offices, local schools, recreation centers, clinics, pharmacies, stores, and businesses.
- Send flyers to each participating organization for distribution.

### On the Day of the Event:

- Set up tables, chairs, and a check-in table prior to your event.
- Make plenty of sign-in sheets. Create a separate sign-in sheet for members of the media.
- Don't forget the refreshments!
- Make signs to direct participants and reporters to your event.

### Tracking Media Coverage:

If you are distributing information to the media, plan ahead of time to track your coverage. There are both paid and free resources to track media coverage.

Free media tracking resources search for news articles based on your specific search term(s) and a date range. Some tracking services will send automatic email alerts to notify you when your event and/or keywords are mentioned.

Paid media tracking typically captures a wider range of media stories (both print and online) than free Internet search tools. Paid media tracking sources search within certain locations, news outlet types, and/or specific dates. Some paid media tracking tools offer email alerts and the ability to search archived Web and print news; they also allow users to tailor searches to obtain the most relevant media stories. Other paid

media services monitor all forms of social media, including blogs, top video and image-sharing sites, forums, opinion sites, mainstream online media, and Twitter.

Be sure to share media coverage with your community partners, stakeholders, and all those who helped you plan and promote your event. Post a summary of media coverage on your organization's Web site. No matter the size or success of your event, remember that your efforts are key to educating the public about important health issues.

Last but not least, share your feedback and results with us here at [healthfinder.gov](http://healthfinder.gov). You can contact us at [info@nhic.org](mailto:info@nhic.org) or send us a tweet @healthfinder (<http://twitter.com/healthfinder>) .



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