



Federal Health Leaders Reflect on the Ongoing Importance of HIV Testing

Thursday, June 27, marks the 2024 National HIV Testing Day. Here's how to get free HIV self-testing kits.

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Thursday, June 27, marks [National HIV Testing Day \(NHTD\)](#). Annually observed for 29 years now, it highlights and emphasizes the ongoing importance of [HIV testing](#).

Admiral Rachel Levine, MD, Assistant Secretary for Health, reflects on the significance of testing. She notes, "I began HIV work in New York as a pediatrician in the 1980s. Through the years, it has been critically important to me to remind friends, family and colleagues of the importance of HIV testing." NHTD aligns with goal #1 of the [National HIV/AIDS Strategy](#), aiming to increase awareness of HIV and knowledge of HIV status through testing, and is a key pillar of the [Ending the HIV Epidemic in the U.S. initiative](#). "For people with undiagnosed HIV, testing is the first step in maintaining a healthy life and preventing HIV transmission," she adds.

The 2024 theme, "[Level up your self-love: check your status](#)," emphasizes valuing yourself, showing yourself compassion and respect, and honoring your health needs with self-love. Knowing your HIV status helps you choose options to stay healthy. "For you, for your family, for your friends, for our community, take an HIV test and know your status," says Francisco Ruiz, MS, Director of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy.

Kaye Hayes, MPA, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Infectious Disease and Director, Office of Infectious Disease and HIV/AIDS Policy (OIDP), reflects, "I remember the first National HIV Testing Day held in 1995. Then and today, it is imperative for me to talk to friends and family about the importance of HIV testing to support an individual's self-care and remind folks HIV is still an issue in 2024."

Testing supports a syndemic approach and is the pathway to engaging people in care to keep them healthy, regardless of their test result. Timothy Harrison, PhD, Principal Deputy Director, OIDP, emphasizes, "This year's theme for National HIV Testing Day is about self-care. Knowing your HIV status helps you choose options to stay healthy."

Dr. Harrison adds, "I encourage individuals and their families and friends to learn more about HIV testing and testing locations at [HIV.gov](#)." Locators hosted by [HIV.gov](#) and [CDC.gov](#), among others, allow individuals to search by ZIP code for testing services or self-test kits provided by local, state,

and national programs. Additionally, the CDC and many other organizations are also distributing [free HIV self-testing kits](#) via Together TakeMeHome, with information available [in Spanish](#) as well.

Stay tuned for a message from members of the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS about the day on HIV.gov.

Find a [list of resources](#), such as service locators and CDC testing recommendations, on HIV.gov, and [learn more about free HIV testing, including syphilis and hepatitis C testing on June 27](#).

More information about HIV testing is available on our [HIV Testing Overview page](#) and on CDC's [HIV Testing Basics](#) page.

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