



News Release

For Immediate Release

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Now is the Time to Get Tested for HIV

Thousands of Utahns are Unaware They are Living with HIV

(Salt Lake City, UT) — With as many as 2,500 Utahns unaware they are living with HIV, the Utah Department of Health (UDOH), local health departments and a group of Utah organizations have agreed to band together this June to provide the largest free offering of rapid HIV screenings in Utah's history.

From June 21 to June 26, free and confidential HIV testing will be available at many non-profit organizations, community centers and local health departments throughout Utah. Most locations will have a new rapid form of testing available which is a pinprick HIV test that delivers results in as little as 20 minutes.

The UDOH is encouraging anyone who may be at risk to take the test. All Utahns should consider HIV testing if they've never had an HIV test, or have had unprotected sex or shared a needle since their last test.

"Positive or negative, it's better to know," said Lynn Meinor, Manager, HIV Prevention Program, UDOH. "Getting tested won't change your HIV status, but it will help you avoid unknowingly spreading the disease. Plus, by simply taking the time to go and get tested, you can learn what simple steps you can take in the future to reduce your risk."

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Page 2 of 2 – Now is the Time to Get Tested for HIV

On-site, confidential counseling will be available at each testing location, with additional services available, if needed, for those who test positive. Complete list of locations, rapid testing sites and testing times are available by contacting the UDOH at (801) 538-6096 or by visiting www.aidsinfoutah.org. or www.health.utah.gov/els/hivaids

According to the National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA), as many as 280,000 Americans are living with HIV but don't know it. In Utah, that amounts to nearly 2,500 people.

Each June NAPWA and other national and state organizations push to increase HIV awareness and testing, but HIV prevention is a year-round goal. Confidential HIV testing is available throughout the year at local health departments and other community organizations in Utah. The cost of a test ranges from \$15 to \$40 and some sites offer sliding-scale fees.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.