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Established in 1945, DuPage County Health Department promotes physical and emotional health; prevents illness injury and disability; protects health from environmental risk factors, and strives to assure the provision of accessible, quality service.

November 27, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Learn Your HIV Status-World AIDS Day is December 1

DUPAGE COUNTY—The only way to know for sure whether you have HIV is to get tested. Knowing your status is important because it helps you make healthy decisions to prevent getting or transmitting HIV.

World AIDS Day, which has been observed since 1988, is important because it reminds the public, healthcare providers and government that HIV has not gone away—there is still a vital need to raise money, increase awareness, fight prejudice and improve education.

The theme for World AIDS Day 2019 is “Ending the HIV/AIDS Epidemic: Community by Community.” The 2019 theme draws attention to the importance of tailoring efforts to diagnose, treat, prevent and respond to HIV. The day provides an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV, to show support for those living with HIV and to remember those who have died from an AIDS-related illness. Learn what you can do to promote HIV prevention, treatment, care and research by visiting HIV.gov and www.cdc.gov/hiv.

In 2018, an estimated 37.9 million people were living with HIV/AIDS worldwide and an estimated 35 million people have died from AIDS-related illnesses since the beginning of the epidemic. Today, scientific advances have been made in HIV prevention and treatment, and there are laws to protect people living with HIV.

More tools than ever are now available to prevent HIV. You can use strategies such as abstinence (not having sex), limiting your number of sexual partners, never sharing needles and using condoms the right way every time you have sex. You may also be able to take advantage of HIV prevention medicines such as [pre-exposure prophylaxis](#) (PrEP) and [post-exposure prophylaxis](#) (PEP).

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is a once-daily pill that, when taken as prescribed, can protect HIV-negative people at high risk for infection.

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PrEP is up to 99 percent effective at preventing the sexual transmission of HIV and at least 74 percent effective for people who inject drugs. The DuPage County Health Department offers PrEP as part of its Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic services and also provides PrEP trainings to healthcare providers twice a year.

DuPage County residents may be tested for HIV through a number of options including doctors' offices, home-test kits and at the Health Department's Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Clinic, which provides screening, counseling and referrals. HIV testing is provided at no cost.

For information about HIV testing, PrEP and treatment options in DuPage County, contact the Health Department at (630) 682-7400.

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