

111 N. County Farm Rd., Wheaton, IL 60187

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For Immediate Release

Media Inquiries:

(630) 221-7374
media@dupagehealth.org

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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.

Learn Your HIV Status – World AIDS Day is December 1

DuPage County – The DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) is encouraging individuals to know their HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) status by getting tested on World AIDS Day, December 1. Early knowledge of HIV status provides access to life-extending treatment options. DuPage County residents can be tested for HIV through several 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, through the DuPage County Health Department, is provided at no cost.

World AIDS Day is dedicated to raising awareness of the AIDS epidemic caused by the spread of HIV infection. AIDS is a chronic, potentially life-threatening condition caused by HIV. By damaging your immune system, HIV interferes with your body's ability to fight the organisms that cause disease.

The theme for World AIDS Day 2023 is "World AIDS Day 35: Remember and Commit". This pays tribute to the 35th commemoration of this important day and to all those we have lost to HIV/AIDS. Remembering the lives lost not only honors their memory but also emphasizes the urgency of our commitment to end the HIV epidemic.

More tools than ever are available to prevent HIV. If you have HIV or are at risk, it's important to make choices that keep you healthy and protect others. You can use strategies such as:

- abstinence (not having sex)
- limiting your number of sexual partners
- never sharing needles
- using condoms the right way every time you have sex.

You may also be able to take advantage of HIV prevention medicines, such as those used for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and postexposure prophylaxis (PEP). PrEP is a once-daily pill that, when taken as prescribed, can protect HIV-negative people at high risk for infection. 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. DCHD offers PrEP at no cost through its STD Clinic services and also provides PrEP trainings to healthcare providers.

For more information about HIV testing, PrEP, and DCHD's STD clinic and HIV Prevention program, contact the Health Department at (630) 682-7400 or visit

<https://www.dupagehealth.org/352/STD-HIV>.

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