



Health and Human Services MEDIA RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 17, 2016

Free HIV testing offered during June

National HIV Testing Campaign



SARASOTA COUNTY — Free HIV testing is available to the public at locations in the region beginning on June 20 as part of the 22nd annual National HIV Testing campaign. Some locations will also offer testing for other sexually transmitted infections such as syphilis and gonorrhea as well as blood pressure, and glucose (blood sugar) screenings.

This is the 35th year since the start of the AIDS pandemic. Despite advances in testing and treatment, many people who are HIV positive still do not know it. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [website](#), one in eight people living with HIV in the United States are unaware of their HIV status.

“Anyone can get HIV if they engage in any form of unprotected sex or share needles; even it’s just one time. People living with HIV/AIDS come from all walks of life and occupations. Getting tested regularly allows you to get into treatment earlier and take positive steps to stay well while your immune system is still healthy,” said Valerie Wojciechowicz, a Sarasota resident who educates and advocates for women living with HIV. “Today, my quality of life is good even with HIV in part because of the early diagnosis, treatment and positive lifestyle changes I made when I first learned of my HIV status nearly 30 years ago.”

The risk factors for HIV infection are having unprotected sex and sharing needles or syringes. Knowing your HIV status means getting into medical treatment earlier, taking steps to stay healthy and following recommendations to keep from spreading the virus to others.

HIV testing is fast and easy. The Clearview® HIV Test (rapid test), done with a finger prick, provides preliminary test results in only 15-minutes. Test results are always kept private and not shared with anyone, including family members, significant others, employers or landlords.

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MEDIA NOTES:

DOH-Sarasota Media Contact:

Dianne Shipley, 941-861-2852; cell 941-302-1058; DOHSarasotaNews@flhealth.gov

Website: www.sarasotahealth.org



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Reduce your risk for HIV infection:

- **Protect yourself.** The best way to prevent HIV is not to have sex. If you do have sex, use a new condom every time. Do not share needles or syringes for any reason, whether to inject drugs (recreational or medical) or for tattoos and body piercing.
- **Talk about sex and HIV with your partners.** Find out when they were last tested for HIV and what their status was. HIV is primarily spread through four fluids--semen, vaginal fluids, blood, and breast milk.
- **Talk to your doctor.** If you are sexually active, you should get tested for HIV. Ask your doctor for an HIV test. Women who test positive should get treatment during all pregnancies and not breastfeed their babies.

The HIV/AIDS Network of Southwest Florida (HANS) works to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS in the community. HANS-member organizations as well as CARES Outreach Services, Inc. in collaboration with the Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County are offering free HIV testing and education opportunities during June listed by location as follows:

SARASOTA

CARES Outreach Services, Inc. - HIV, *Hepatitis C and *Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) testing

Ongoing -- Mondays thru Fridays: from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Walk-Ins Welcomed, Appointments advised

By appointment only: from 5 – 11 p.m.

CARES Outreach Services at Hedges Health Mart Pharmacy

24 N Lime Ave, Unit #38:

*(Hepatitis C and STI - must meet screening requirements)

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SARASOTA

Walk-in HIV testing (rapid test) (HANS)

Monday, June 20, 9 a.m.-noon

1781 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Sarasota

Contact: Jessley Santiago, 941-366-0461

Sponsoring organization: Community AIDS Network

Walk-in HIV (rapid test), and Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) testing

Monday, June 20, 9:30-2:30 p.m.

Goodwill Manasota Mecca

5150 N. Tamiami Trail

Contact: Sarasota County Contact Center, 941-861-5000

Sponsoring organization: Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County

CARES Outreach Services, Inc. - HIV and Hepatitis C testing

Monday, June 20 and June 27, 8-11 a.m.

Wednesday, June 22 and June 29, 5 – 7:30 a.m.

Sarasota Metro Treatment Center

323 Interstate Blvd, Sarasota

Contact: Michael Kehoe, 941-365-5926

Sponsoring organization: CARES Outreach Services, Inc. in collaboration with community partners and in participation with DOH-Sarasota

Walk-in HIV (rapid test), and Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) testing

Monday, June 20 and June 27, 1-4 p.m. and Wednesday, June 22, 1-5 p.m. and

Thursday, June 23, 8:30-11:30 a.m.

William L. Little Health and Human Services Center (Health Department)

2200 Ringling Blvd., Room 1127

Contact: 941-861-2873 (Ask for a Disease Intervention Specialist)

Sponsoring organization: Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County

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Walk-in HIV testing (rapid test) (HANS)

Wednesday, June 22, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Community AIDS Network/Mary Ann Robinson Wellness Center
1231 N. Tuttle Ave., Sarasota
Contact: Jessley Santiago, 941-366-0461
Sponsoring organization: Community AIDS Network

CARES Outreach Services, Inc. - HIV and Hepatitis C testing

Resurrection House

Wednesday, June 22nd and June 29, 10 a.m.-noon

507 Kumquat Court, Sarasota

Contact: Michael Kehoe, 941-365-5926

Sponsoring organization: CARES Outreach Services, Inc. in collaboration with community partners and in participation with DOH-Sarasota

VENICE

Walk-in HIV and STD testing, blood pressure and glucose (blood sugar) screening

Wednesday, June 29, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Salvation Army Family Store

1160 U.S. 41 Bypass South

Contact: Sarasota County Contact Center, 941-861-5000

Sponsoring organization: Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County

NORTH PORT

HIV Testing (by appointment only) (HANS)

Thursday, June 23

North Port Community AIDS Network

14243 Tamiami Trail, North Port

Contact: Community AIDS Network, 941-888-2144

Sponsoring organization: Community AIDS Network

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ARCADIA (DeSoto County)

HIV Testing, blood pressure and glucose (blood sugar) screening (HANS)

Friday, June 24, 3– 6 p.m.

Cardenas Supermarket (DOH-DeSoto's Mobile Medical Unit)

210 W. Magnolia St., Arcadia

Contact: Adela Chancey, 863-491-7580 ext. 131

Sponsoring Organization: DOH-DeSoto

HIV Testing, blood pressure and glucose (blood sugar) screening (HANS)

Monday, June 27, 1-4 p.m.

Florida Department of Health in DeSoto County (DOH-DeSoto's Mobile Medical Unit)

1031 E. Oak Street, Arcadia

Contact: DOH-DeSoto, 863-491-7580

Sponsoring Organization: DOH-DeSoto

FT. MYERS (Lee County)

Walk-in HIV testing (rapid test) (HANS)

Friday, June 24, noon-4 p.m.

Walgreens (working with McGregor Clinic)

4204 Palm Beach Boulevard, Ft. Myers

Contact: Jessley Santiago, 941-366-0461

Sponsoring organization: Community AIDS Network

For more information on HIV testing opportunities throughout the year, call 941-861-5000 or visit the HANS website at www.hivsarasota.org.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts. Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#) and on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit www.FloridaHealth.gov.



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Sarasota County prohibits discrimination in all services, programs or activities.
View the complete policy at www.scgov.net/ADA/Pages/default.aspx

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DOH-Sarasota website: www.sarasotahealth.org

HIV/AIDS Network of Southwest Florida website: www.hivsarasota.org



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