



NEWS

MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS
COURT HOUSE, NORRISTOWN, PA., BOX 311, 19404-0311

Frank X. Custer, Communications Director

Jessica Willingham, Communications Assistant

PHONE (610) 278-3061 FAX (610) 278-5943

COMMISSIONERS: JOSH SHAPIRO, *Chair*

LESLIE S. RICHARDS, *Vice Chair*, BRUCE L. CASTOR, JR., *Commissioner*



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World AIDS Day 2013 – Getting to Zero

Norristown, PA (November 29, 2013) – December 1, 2013 is World AIDS Day, an awareness day that sparked a global initiative to encourage countries and communities to take a stand against HIV/AIDS. AIDS is the final stage of HIV infection. It can take years for a person infected with HIV to reach this stage. One in five of the more than one million people living with HIV in the United States are unaware of their infection.

From 2011-2015, World AIDS Days will have the theme of “Getting to zero: Zero new HIV infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS related deaths.” The World AIDS Campaign focus on “Zero AIDS related deaths” signifies a push towards greater access to treatment for all and a call for governments to act now.

In addition to a call for treatment, a major focus remains on prevention. It is important to know that the infection is passed from one person to another by:

- Having unprotected sex (vaginal, anal, or oral) with a person who has HIV
- Sharing needles with someone who has HIV
- Breastfeeding, pregnancy, or childbirth if a mother has HIV
- Getting a transfusion of blood that has HIV, although this is rare in the United States

In recognition of World AIDS Day, the Montgomery County Health Department (MCHD) encourages all citizens to get tested for HIV. The only way to know for sure if you have HIV is to get a test. You could have HIV and still feel healthy. Many doctors recommend HIV testing for all teens and adults between the ages of 13 and 64.

It is especially important to get tested regularly if you are at high risk of infection. Get tested for HIV at least once a year if you:

- Have unprotected sex (sex without a condom) with someone who might have HIV
- Have sex with men who have sex with men
- Use drugs with needles
- Have a sex partner who is HIV-positive

By getting tested through the Montgomery County Health Department (MCHD), you are able to get tested for free, to speak with a testing counselor confidentially about any questions or concerns you may have about your risk, and get the answers you need to walk out confident about ways to reduce your risk in the future.

For HIV testing, please stop in to MCHD during Communicable Disease Clinic Hours:

<http://www.montcopa.org/index.aspx?NID=1048> or make an appointment for an *OraQuick Rapid HIV Test*.

MCHD Norristown Clinic Site hours are Tuesdays from 9:00-11:30 a.m. and Thursdays from 1:00-3:30 p.m.

MCHD Pottstown Clinic site hours are Mondays from 1:30-3:30 p.m.

This method provides a result in approximately 30 minutes. Call today to schedule an appointment at 610-278-5117 and ask to speak to someone about a Rapid HIV test.