

June 27, 2016

HEALTH OFFICIALS ENCOURAGE HIV TESTING FOR EVERYONE

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Sanford, Fla. – Today, the Florida Department of Health in Seminole County (DOH-Seminole) joins communities across the nation in recognizing National HIV Testing Day, a yearly event promoting awareness for HIV testing and encouraging people to know their status.

“Preventing the potentially devastating effects of a disease like HIV begins with getting tested,” said Dr. Swannie Jett, Health Officer for DOH-Seminole. “We know timely and effective treatment is prevention; and greatly lowers the risk for that individual to transmit the virus to others. The sooner treatment is initiated in early stages of HIV, the greater the likelihood a person has to lead a long, healthful and fulfilling life. I encourage anyone unsure of their status to use DOH-Seminole’s resources to get tested and seek support.”

Florida leads the nation in new HIV infections. Miami-Dade and Broward Counties were number one and two in the U.S. in new infections in 2014 per 100,000 residents. According to [Florida Charts](#), there were approximately 13,567 HIV cases in the state of Florida from 2012 to 2014. One-hundred and thirty-four of those cases were contracted in Seminole County.

More than an estimated 1.2 million people are currently living with HIV in the U.S., and almost 1 in 8 are unaware they are infected. When individuals are diagnosed early, they can be placed in appropriate treatment and care resulting in better health outcomes. New treatments, medications and support mean longer, healthier lives for people with HIV.

Free HIV Testing is available today from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Sanford Health Office, located on 400 West Airport Boulevard. No appointment is needed. Call 407-665-3216 for more information. Additional information about HIV/AIDS is available at www.AIDS.gov and www.SeminoleCoHealth.com.

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