

June 16, 2014



## Free HIV testing offered for National HIV Testing campaign

SARASOTA COUNTY — Free HIV testing will be available to the public at several locations in Sarasota County as part of the **20th annual National HIV Testing Day** observance during the next several weeks.

While the focus is on providing HIV testing to those who may not know their HIV status, some locations noted at the end of this release, will also offer testing for other sexually transmitted infections such as syphilis and gonorrhea as well as blood pressure, and glucose (blood sugar) screenings.

Health officials note that this year marks the 33rd year since the start of the AIDS pandemic. Despite advances in testing and treatment, many people who are HIV positive still do not even know it. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), one out of five 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 if 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 28 years ago.”

The risk factors for HIV infection are having unprotected sex and sharing needles or syringes. If individuals have never been tested, or had unprotected sex or shared a needle since their last test, now is the time to get an HIV test. Knowing their HIV status can help them get into a medical treatment earlier, take steps to stay healthy, and 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 are not shared with anyone, including family members, significant others, employers or landlords.

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The HIV/AIDS Network of Southwest Florida (HANS), which works to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS at the grass-roots community level, offers the following recommendations to reduce risk for HIV infection:

- **Be safe:** 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 it:** 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 at least once. Do not assume your doctor will ask you to be tested for HIV. Women who test positive should get treatment during all pregnancies and not breastfeed their babies.

CARES Outreach Services, Inc. in collaboration with community partners and in participation with the Florida Department of Health (in Sarasota and Charlotte Counties – DOH-Sarasota and DOH-Charlotte), and HANS member organizations are offering free HIV testing and education opportunities for mid-to-late June as follows:

### **SARASOTA**

#### **CARES Outreach Services, Inc. -- HIV testing**

Wednesday, June 18, 9:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m.

Barrel 87

6587 Gateway Ave.

Contact: Michael Kehoe, 941-365-5926

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

#### **CARES Outreach Services, Inc. – HIV testing**

Friday, June 20, 6-11 p.m.

Express Store

1415 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way

Contact: Michael Kehoe, 941-365-5926

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

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**CARES Outreach Services, Inc. – HIV testing**

Saturday, June 21, 9:30 p.m.-2 a.m.

Throb Nightclub

2201 Industrial Blvd.

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 Disease (STD) testing (HANS)**

Monday, June 23, 1-4 p.m. and Wednesday, June 25, 8:30-11:30 a.m. and

Thursday, June 26, 1-5 p.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

**CARES Outreach Services, Inc. – HIV testing**

Wednesday, June 25; 9:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m.

Throb Nightclub

2201 Industrial Blvd.

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 testing, blood pressure and glucose (blood sugar) screening (HANS)**

Thursday, June 26, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Salvation Army – Health In Motion Mobile Medical Unit

1400 Tenth St.

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

Sponsoring organization: Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County

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

Thursday, June 26, 3-7 p.m.

Comprehensive Care Clinic Mobile Unit at Walgreens

3550 Fruitville Road (Corner of U.S. Highway 301 – Washington Blvd. and Fruitville Road)

Contact: Jessley Santiago, 941-366-0461

Sponsoring organization: Community AIDS Network/Mary Ann Robinson Wellness Center

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**CARES Outreach Services, Inc. – HIV testing**

Friday, June 27; 4-10 p.m.

Star Mini-Mart

2950 N. Washington Blvd.

Contact: Michael Kehoe, 941-365-5926

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

**CARES Outreach Services, Inc. – HIV testing**

Saturday, June 28, 9:30 p.m.-1 a.m.

Barrel 87

6587 Gateway Ave.

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 testing, blood pressure and glucose (blood sugar) screening (HANS)**

Wednesday, June 25, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Salvation Army Family Store (Look for Health In Motion Mobile Medical Unit)

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**

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

Friday, June 27, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Goodwill Manasota Center of North Port (Look for Health In Motion Mobile Medical Unit)

14809 Tamiami Trail

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

Sponsoring organization: Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County

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

Monday, June 30; 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m.

Publix Super Market at Heron Creek Towne Center

1291 S. Sumter Blvd.

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

Sponsoring organization: Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County

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**PUNTA GORDA (Charlotte County)**

**CARES Outreach Services, Inc. – HIV testing**

Thursday, June 19; 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Charlotte Behavioral Health Center

1700 Education Ave.

Contact: Michael Kehoe, 941-365-5926

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

**PORT CHARLOTTE (Charlotte County)**

**CARES Outreach Services, Inc. – HIV testing**

Saturday, June 28, 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

Edgewater Ministries

19190 Cochran Blvd .

Contact: Michael Kehoe, 941-365-5926

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

For more information on HIV testing opportunities throughout the year, call 941-861-5000 or visit the HANS website at [www.hiv Sarasota.org](http://www.hiv Sarasota.org).

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Sarasota County prohibits discrimination in all services, programs or activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, marital status, familial status, religion, or genetic information. Persons with disabilities who require assistance or alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.), or who wish to file a complaint, should contact Sarasota County ADA/ Civil Rights Coordinator, 1660 Ringling Blvd., Sarasota, FL 34236. Phone: 941-861-5000, TTY 7-1-1 or 1-800-955-8771; email: [adaordinator@scgov.net](mailto:adaordinator@scgov.net).

***MEDIA NOTES:***

DOH-Sarasota and HANS Media Contact:

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DOH-Sarasota website: [www.sarasotahealth.org](http://www.sarasotahealth.org)

HIV/AIDS Network of Southwest Florida website: [www.hiv Sarasota.org](http://www.hiv Sarasota.org)

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