

GRANT COUNTY

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HEALTH DISTRICT

1038 W. Ivy Avenue
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Media Advisory
December 1, 2008

Take control of your health and your life. Get tested for HIV.



Today is the 20th anniversary of the establishment of World AIDS Day. World AIDS Day was established by the World Health Organization in 1988 and is observed each year on December 1st, providing governments, national AIDS programs, faith organizations, community organizations, and individuals with an opportunity to raise awareness and focus attention on the global AIDS epidemic. HIV is the virus that causes AIDS which has had a devastating impact in the lives of every day people living in Grant County.

According to estimates by WHO and UNAIDS, 33.2 million people were living with HIV at the end of 2007. That same year, some 2.5 million people became newly infected, and 2.1 million died of AIDS, including 330 000 children. About 1.1 million Americans are estimated to be HIV-positive, and each year an additional 56,000 become infected with the disease. Currently, Grant Health District has 25 people with HIV or AIDS on their caseload. In Washington state 70% of HIV cases are men and women ages 20-39.

Community Partnership in Prevention (CPIP) is a local work group of over 15 organizations working to decrease the number of cases of HIV, AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases in Grant County. One of their primary goals is to raise awareness that HIV and AIDS are still very real and that everyone who is sexually active should get tested.

Know Your Status. Get Tested for HIV.

If you do not know if you are infected with HIV, you could be spreading it to others. If you are HIV-positive, you must take steps to prevent passing your HIV infection to another person. If you find out that you have HIV, it does not mean that you are going to get sick and die. While there is no cure for HIV, new drugs are available that can help you stay healthy and decrease the amount of HIV virus in your body.

The HIV test detects whether or not you have been exposed to the HIV virus. There are several different kinds of tests: Blood tests, urine tests, and an oral (mouth) test. Only a very small amount of blood is needed for the blood tests. HIV tests can take a few days to 2 weeks for results, or with rapid HIV tests you can get results in about 20 minutes.

Testing can reduce the number of new infections in two ways. Individuals who learn they are infected are taught about not sharing contaminated drug needles and about safer-sex practices. Also, by getting effective early treatment, they can be less likely to transmit the disease.

Where Can I Get Tested?

Free and confidential or anonymous HIV tests are available. To find an HIV testing site near you:

click www.hivtest.org

text your zip code to Knowit (566948)

call 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) TTY: 1-888-232-6348

In English, en Español Open 24 hours a day — Confidential

What Else Can I Do?

You have the power to help stop the spread of HIV.

- Be safe. The best way to prevent HIV is to abstain from having sex. If you do have sex, use a new latex condom every time. Do not share needles or syringes.
- 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. Be clear that you will be having safer sex...or none at all.
- 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.
- Spread the word. Thousands of women are infected with HIV each year. Set an example by getting tested and spreading the word that others should do the same.

Where can I get more information?

Click or Call one of the following resources for more information on HIV and AIDS.

click U.S. Department of Health and Human Services www.aids.gov

or <http://www.hhs.gov/aidsawarenessdays/days/world/index.html>

click <http://www.who.int/features/qa/71/en/index.html>

call Grant County Health District 509-754-6060 or 709-766-7960

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