



News from the Office of
ERIE COUNTY EXECUTIVE MARK POLONCARZ

NEWS RELEASE

Health Commissioner Dr. Gale Burstein

June 5, 2013

CONTACT: JoAnne Paxon/ JoAnne.Paxon@erie.gov
Phone: (716)858-4941/ Mobile: (716) 364-3028

National HIV Testing Day June 27th, 2013

Erie County Department of Health Highlights Importance of HIV Testing

ERIE COUNTY, NY— The Erie County Department of Health (“ECDOH”) supports National HIV Testing Day (NHTD) June 27, 2013. NHTD is an annual campaign that encourages people of all ages to be tested for the HIV virus.

“Too many people don't know they have HIV,” **said Erie County Health Commissioner Dr. Gale Burstein.** “In the United States, nearly 1.2 million people are living with HIV, and almost one in five don't know they are infected. Getting tested is the first step to knowing your HIV status. If you have HIV, getting medical care and taking medicines regularly helps you live a longer, healthier life and also lowers the chances of passing HIV on to others.”

New York State law requires health care providers to offer all patients between the ages of 13 to 64 a voluntary HIV test. The law applies to anyone receiving treatment for a non-life-threatening condition in a hospital, a hospital emergency department or a primary care setting, such as a doctor's office or outpatient clinic.

HIV infection can spread more readily - and kills more readily - when people don't know they're infected. By integrating HIV testing into routine health care, the new law makes it easier to learn your current HIV status. If you find you are HIV-negative, you can take steps to stay negative. If you learn you are HIV-positive, your health care provider will help link you to follow-up medical care.

In the mid-1990s, the introduction of highly effective antiretroviral therapy greatly extended the life expectancy of people living with HIV and caused a dramatic drop in AIDS deaths. However, without medical care, HIV still leads to AIDS and early death. Since the beginning of the epidemic, more than 600,000 people with AIDS in the United States have died, and even today, nearly 18,000 people each year with AIDS in the United States die.

Far too many people are diagnosed too late to fully benefit from available life-extending treatment. Among those initially diagnosed with HIV infection during 2009, one-third (32 percent) were diagnosed with AIDS within 12 months, indicating they were likely infected for many years without knowing it. These late diagnoses represent missed opportunities for treatment and prevention.

Your primary care physician or the following organizations provide HIV Testing:

Erie County Department of Health
608 William Street
Buffalo, NY
(716) 858-6290

Evergreen Health Services of WNY
206 S Elmwood Ave
Buffalo NY
(716) 847-2441

Planned Parenthood of WNY
2697 Main St 240 Center Rd
Buffalo NY West Seneca NY
(716) 831-2200 (716) 831-2200

Erie County Medical Center
462 Grider St
Buffalo NY
(716) 898-4119

For additional information on HIV Testing go to:

Erie County Department of Health

<http://www2.erie.gov/health/index.php?q=node/97>

Center for Disease Control and prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/>