

## New Jersey AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline

### **PRESS RELEASE**

November 2024

## **Sustain and Accelerate World AIDS Day 2024**

Each year on December 1<sup>st</sup>, the global community unites to support people and communities affected by HIV while honoring the memories of those who have died from HIV-related illnesses. World AIDS Day also provides an opportunity to celebrate the progress made in changing HIV from a terminal illness to a manageable chronic condition. By changing the landscape of HIV, we have greatly improved health outcomes for people with HIV and have prevented thousands of new HIV infections.

Today, people with HIV are thriving because of effective treatment (called [antiretroviral therapy](#)) and increased support services. They're living healthy, without fear of passing HIV to their sex partners or developing AIDS. Keeping an [undetectable](#) viral load makes it possible to stay healthy because it keeps the amount of virus in the body to an undetectable level. All people living with HIV should start treatment regardless of how long they have been living with HIV.

Although advancements have made it possible to end HIV, a key challenge remains. HIV stigma greatly affects people's health and emotional well-being. These negative attitudes and stereotypes keep people at risk for HIV and people living with HIV from accessing essential HIV prevention, treatment, care, and support services because of the inequities they continue to face both in their personal lives and healthcare settings. Stigma stops people from knowing their HIV status and sharing their status with others in their lives, including partners.

Unequal progress fuels HIV. Removing stigma as a barrier to ending HIV is a critical step in building on the progress we've made thus far and continuing to improve health outcomes for communities at risk of HIV. It puts equity at the forefront and increases access for anyone needing services. Stigma prevents thousands of people from knowing their HIV status and connecting to prevention or treatment services.

If you think you have HIV or have been exposed to HIV, contact the New Jersey AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline for information about HIV and other STIs ([Sexually Transmitted Infections](#)). Healthcare providers are available 24 hours a day, every day of the year, to provide free and private/confidential help, including connecting callers to sexual health services in New Jersey. Call 1-800-624-2377 or [Chat Here](#).

**New Jersey AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline**

Healthcare professionals (doctors, nurses and pharmacists) provide telephone consultation for people seeking information about HIV/AIDS, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), and other sexually transmitted infections (STI) including hepatitis. Callers receive information tailored to their needs; discussion about prevention, referrals for testing sites and other related services, counseling and testing locations, and information on treatment and adverse reactions to medications. The hotline is administered by the New Jersey Poison Control Center and funded by the New Jersey Department of Health, Division of HIV, STD, and TB services.

**Rutgers New Jersey Medical School**

Founded in 1954, Rutgers New Jersey Medical School is the oldest school of medicine in the state. Today it is part of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and graduates approximately 170 physicians a year. In addition to providing the MD degree, the school offers MD/PhD, MD/MPH and MD/MBA degrees through collaborations with other institutions of higher education. Dedicated to excellence in education, research, clinical care and community outreach, the medical school comprises 20 academic departments and works with several healthcare partners, including its principal teaching hospital, University Hospital. Its faculty consists of numerous world-renowned scientists and many of the region's "top doctors." Home to the nation's oldest student-run clinic, New Jersey Medical School hosts more than 50 centers and institutes, including the Public Health Research Institute Center, the Global Tuberculosis Institute and the Neurological Institute of New Jersey. For more information please visit: [njms.rutgers.edu](http://njms.rutgers.edu).

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