

VA HIV Testing Week, June 27–July 3: Making Testing Routine



Fact: Nine out of 10 Veterans have never been tested for HIV. It's time to put HIV testing on VA's radar screen.

Every year, the U.S. marks June 27 as National HIV Testing Day. This year, VA is going one better. We're having **VA HIV Testing Week, June 27–July 3**. The week will kick off a sustained effort to increase HIV testing throughout VHA, with a goal of diagnosing those Veterans with HIV and providing them with the care they need.

We all know that HIV testing saves lives. It's as cost-effective as screening for colon cancer or diabetes. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends making HIV testing part of routine medical care. So does the American College of Physicians. And so does VA—routine voluntary HIV testing is now official VA policy. Therefore, we're not trying to just increase testing for a week. We're shooting much higher. We want to make HIV testing a clinical reflex in VA. Why? Because of the concern that there are Veterans in VHA care with undiagnosed HIV infection.

Fact: Every 9 ½ minutes, someone in the U.S. is infected with HIV.



According to CDC, about 1.2 million people in the U.S. are living with HIV and AIDS. 25 percent do not know they are HIV positive and 40 percent of people with HIV already have AIDS when they test HIV positive.

At Martinsburg VAMC, Rapid Oral-Swab HIV Testing (with results available in 30 minutes) will be offered to Veterans from 9AM until 3PM each day from Monday June 28 through Thursday July 1. Regular blood tests for HIV can be obtained at any time from your primary care clinic. So let's all encourage Veterans to "Say YES to the test!" and get checked for HIV.