

**LET'S
BRING
HIV OUT
OF THE
CLOSET.**

SPEAKOUT

We've done it before, we can do it again!



The world is changing – and quickly. In less than 10 years, we've won marriage equality at ballot boxes and in courthouses across the country, helped hundreds of companies adopt policies protecting their transgender workers, and passed a fully-inclusive Employment Non-Discrimination Act in the Senate. The lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community has come together in powerful ways and achieved huge successes.

But even with the rising tide of equality, our community continues to face formidable challenges – few greater than HIV. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, gay and bisexual men account for almost two-thirds of all new HIV infections in the United States. Rates of transmission are especially high among young gay and bisexual men of color, who are often unable to seek and obtain high-quality care because of stigma, discrimination and social barriers largely out of their control. And recent studies have shown extremely high HIV rates among transgender women, who are nearly 34 times more likely to have HIV than other women.

Thirty years ago, the LGBT community mobilized to decrease HIV infections dramatically, making the entire LGBT movement stronger. Now it's time to summon the power of our community to change the history of HIV once again. With recent advances in prevention and treatment options, this can be done – and now is the time to act.

The Human Rights Campaign is proud to be partnering with Greater Than AIDS to bring you this resource guide. We hope you'll join us as we recommit ourselves to ending the epidemic and the stigma surrounding the disease.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Krehely". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Jeff Krehely
Vice President & Chief Foundation Officer
Human Rights Campaign

It's Time to Act.

We can't deny the facts – HIV/AIDS is still a major issue in our community. Gay and bisexual men and transgender women represent the majority of new infections occurring in the U.S. each year, and the numbers are on the rise. In major U.S. cities today, about one in five men who have sex with men is HIV positive. And far too many don't even know they are infected.

There Is Hope.

We have more tools available today to prevent and treat HIV than ever before. Early diagnosis and treatment can dramatically improve health, extend life AND help prevent the spread of the disease. People with HIV who are on ongoing antiretroviral treatment can significantly reduce the risk of passing HIV to others by as much as 96 percent.

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (or PrEP for short) is an FDA-approved, once-daily single pill for HIV-negative people that has been shown to significantly reduce the risk of contracting HIV. And, of course, there are condoms, which continue to be a low-cost, effective means of protecting against HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

Whether HIV Positive Or Negative, We All Have A Role To Play.

SPEAKOUT

Speak Out is a campaign from Greater Than AIDS – a leading national response to the U.S. epidemic – to engage the LGBT community in response to HIV/AIDS and confront the silence and stigma that surrounds the disease. Through targeted media messages and community outreach, Speak Out encourages more open communication in relationships, with health care providers, and with the community at large.

#SpeakOutHIV

LET'S BRING HIV OUT OF THE CLOSET.

It starts with a conversation...



FOR OUR RELATIONSHIPS.

Don't let HIV stand in the way of love. Finding out a partner is HIV positive – or revealing your own status – doesn't have to mean the end of the relationship. With ongoing treatment, people with HIV can get their virus under control – even to undetectable levels – where the risk of transmission to sexual partners is dramatically reduced. And, condoms have long been one of our best known – and most accessible – means of protection against HIV as well as many other STDs.



FOR OUR HEALTH.

One in three Americans who is HIV positive is diagnosed so late in the course of their infection that they develop AIDS within one year. For many, that is too late to benefit from the life-saving treatments available today. In addition to improving the health and extending life for those who are positive, we now know the important role treatment also plays in the prevention of HIV.

Given our heightened risk, it is generally recommended that men who have sex with men, and transgender women, be tested at least twice a year, in some cases more frequently.



FOR OUR COMMUNITY.

There have been so many scientific advances, but a major reason HIV continues to spread is because of stigma. Three decades later, too many of us are still dying, often alone, because of it. By talking openly about HIV, we take it out of the shadows. We must make protection, testing and treatment acts of pride, not shame.

LET'S TALK ABOUT PrEP.

What is PrEP?

PrEP is short for pre-exposure prophylaxis, a once-daily single pill to reduce the risk of acquiring HIV. It is an FDA-approved prescription medication sold under the brand name Truvada. People who use PrEP must commit to taking the drug every day and seeing their health care provider for follow-up and testing every three months. It is intended for HIV-negative people at substantial risk of becoming infected with HIV.

How effective is PrEP?

When taken as prescribed, PrEP has been shown to reduce the risk of HIV infection by more than 90 percent. PrEP is much less effective if it is not taken daily. Some studies suggest that it takes at least seven days of daily use for PrEP to reach effectiveness. PrEP does not protect against other STDs, so it is strongly recommended that condoms are used along with PrEP.

If I start PrEP, does this mean I have to take it for the rest of my life?

With proper medical guidance, people can safely start and stop taking PrEP at different times in their lives. There may be periods in your life where it makes sense to take PrEP when your risk of exposure to HIV may be high. These are called “seasons of risk.” Anytime you start PrEP, it is important to remember that it takes at least seven days of daily use to reach effectiveness (see above). It is important to consult a health care provider before starting or ending treatment.

Where can I get PrEP and how much does it cost?

Any health care provider can prescribe PrEP. Many private insurance plans cover PrEP, as does Medicaid, the state-run health program for lower-income persons. If you do not have insurance, ask your health care provider about pharmaceutical patient assistance programs which may be able to offset the cost of the medication.

Talk with a health care provider about whether PrEP is an option for you and to get guidance on use and effectiveness.

SPEAKOUT®

**FOR OUR RELATIONSHIPS.
FOR OUR HEALTH.
FOR OUR COMMUNITY.
LET'S TALK ABOUT HIV.**

