

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Increase in Newly Diagnosed HIV Infection Among Residents of Eastern and Southeastern Idaho**

**Eastern and Southeastern Idaho** – There has been a concerning increase in human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) diagnoses in eastern and southeastern Idaho residents. In just the **first 3 months of 2026**, seven (7) HIV infection cases have been newly diagnosed, compared with an average of **seven cases annually for the previous five years**.

Today, more tools than ever are available to prevent HIV.

#### **Prevention strategies include:**

- Using condoms the right way every time you have sex.
- Never sharing needles, syringes, or other drug injection equipment.
- Using PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) and PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis) medications, which can be prescribed by your healthcare provider.

Effective treatment can reduce the virus to undetectable levels, at which point, the virus is not transmitted to others.

While HIV remains a serious chronic condition, public health officials emphasize that with advances in treatment, HIV, is both preventable and manageable.

“Hearing that cases are increasing can feel scary, but it really comes down to awareness. Getting tested for HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Infections is just part of routine healthcare,” says **Rachel Mugleston**, Health Strategies Program Manager at Eastern Idaho Public Health.

**The only way to know your status is to get tested.** Eastern Idaho Public Health recommends that individuals between the ages of 15 and 65 get tested for HIV at least once as part of routine health care, and more frequently for those with increased risk factors. All pregnant women should be tested at their first prenatal visit and again in the third trimester if at increased risk.

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**Risk Factors include:**

- People who inject drugs and their partners
- People who exchange sex for money or drugs
- Sex partners of people with HIV
- Sexually active gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men
- Heterosexuals who themselves or whose sex partners have had  $\geq 1$  sex partner since their most recent HIV test
- People receiving treatment for hepatitis, tuberculosis, or a sexually transmitted infection

Options for **free testing**, including at-home tests, are available through LetsGetChecked.com/Idaho and Together.TakeMeHome.org.

Individuals can receive access assistance with testing and prevention at the following locations:

- Eastern Idaho Public Health: 1250 Hollipark Dr. Idaho Falls, ID 83401
- Southeastern Idaho Public Health: 1901 Alvin Ricken Dr. Pocatello, ID 83201
- Any Southeastern Idaho Public Health County offices in Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Butte, Caribou, Franklin, Oneida, or Power County
- PrEP locator resource: <https://prelocator.org/>

**Through education and awareness, testing, and a commitment to reducing stigma, we can create a community where prevention is possible, and everyone is supported.**

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