

Mission:
To protect, promote & improve the health
of all people in Florida through integrated
state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
JUN. 16, 2014

MEDIA CONTACT: Marie Mott
desk 850-393-2306
PUBLIC CONTACT: 850-595-6663x107

HEALTH OFFICIALS ENCOURAGE HIV TESTING FOR EVERYONE

PENSACOLA, FL – Officials at the Florida Department of Health in Escambia County (DOH-Escambia) are encouraging area residents to get tested for HIV. Each year the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services recognize June 27 as National HIV Testing Day (NHTD). The purpose of NHTD is to encourage HIV testing within local communities.

- According to the Florida Department of Health Bureau of Communicable Diseases, over 1,100 individuals are living with HIV or AIDS in Escambia County, Florida.
- It is estimated that almost half of new HIV infections are spread by persons who are living with HIV and are unaware of their positive status.
- Those with HIV who are on treatment and in care can reduce the risk of spreading the virus to others by as much as 96 percent.

Early diagnosis and treatment saves lives and is known to reduce the spread of HIV. The CDC recommends HIV testing as a part of routine health care. According to Dr. John J. Lanza, DOH-Escambia's Director, "Persons between the ages of 13 and 64 should be tested for HIV at least once, with those at increased risk tested more frequently."

This year DOH-Escambia, in collaboration with local and national partners, will offer free HIV testing and syphilis screening at the following locations:

- Nadine McCaw Park in Century, Florida on Monday, June 23, 2014, from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.
- Walgreens at 700 N. Pace Blvd. in Pensacola, Florida on Friday, June 27, 2014, from 3 p.m. until 7 p.m.

Multiple free HIV testing sites are available throughout Escambia County. To find a free test site near you, text your zip code to 477493. For additional information on HIV testing, treatments, and services available, please contact DOH-Escambia's Area 1 HIV/AIDS Program at 850/595-6663, ext. 107, visit the Northwest Florida AIDS Consortium website at www.noflacweb.org, or visit the DOH-Escambia website at www.EscambiaHealth.com.

###