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HIV Alliance to Host Testing Events on National HIV Testing Day on June 27

The largest event will be a Pride Block Party in Downtown Eugene from 4pm-6pm, with testing events planned in Salem, Roseburg, and Grants Pass

National HIV Testing is observed each year on June 27th to encourage individuals to get tested for HIV, know their status, and get linked to care and treatment. HIV testing allows people to engage in care to stay healthy, regardless of their test results. It was first observed on June 27, 1995, and this year's theme is *Level up your self-love: check your status*. HIV Alliance will help individuals gain access to both prevention services and treatment options, with events planned in Eugene and Salem to encourage the community to get tested.

In Eugene, a Pride Block Party will be held at Kesey Square in downtown Eugene from 4pm-8pm with support of a Downtown Program Fund grant from the City of Eugene's Cultural Services. The free-to-attend event will feature live music, drag performances, comedy, and speakers with an emphasis on HIV testing and prevention. HIV Alliance is partnering with Afro Valley Film Festival, Eugene Pride, TransPonder, Queer Eugene, and Spectrum Queer bar to organize this event. Free HIV testing will be offered throughout the event, and the first 100 attendees will receive a \$15 food voucher to participating downtown businesses.

People who receive a negative test result can take advantage of HIV prevention methods such as condoms, getting tested regularly, and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). PrEP is a medication that reduces your chances of getting HIV from sex or injection drug use. When taken as prescribed, PrEP reduces the risk of getting HIV from sex by 99% and by 74% among those who inject drugs.

For people who receive a positive test result, they can start HIV treatment to stay healthy. Antiretroviral therapy, also known as ART, involves taking a prescribed oral medication to reduce the viral load in an individual's body. There is also an injectable HIV treatment, which requires regular visits to a primary care provider to receive. HIV Alliance provides primary care out of its Eugene office. Typically, individuals who use the HIV injection treatment start their treatment journey with ART. Individuals need to consult with their provider before switching to HIV injection treatment.

Both of these treatments are also used for viral suppression, which means having less than 200 copies of HIV per milliliter of blood. When an individual is experiencing viral suppression, it means that the HIV virus is undetectable. Being undetectable means that it is both untransmissible and prevents HIV from progressing in the individual, allowing them to live long and healthy lives. There is currently not a cure for HIV, but with ART, most people are able to get the virus under control within six months.

According to the Oregon Health Authority, there were an estimated 8,220 people living with HIV in Oregon in 2022. Of those individuals, it is estimated 1,110 people are undiagnosed. Among people diagnosed with HIV, 77% are virally suppressed, which means that they can not transmit HIV to their sexual partners. The CDC recommends all people, regardless of sexual orientation, are tested for HIV at least once.

HIV Alliance will be hosting free testing events in Salem, Eugene, Roseburg, and Grants Pass on National HIV Testing Day. See Details below.

Salem: HIV Testing at Church at the Park

Where: 1280 Center Street NE Salem, OR

When: June 27th, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Eugene: Pride Block Party for National HIV Testing Day at Kesey Square

Where: 10 E. Broadway Eugene, OR

When: June 27th, 4 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Roseburg: HIV Testing at ADAPT

Where: 621 W Madrone St. Roseburg, OR

When: June 27th, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Grants Pass: HIV Testing with Oregon Department of Human Services

Where: 2101 NW Hawthorne Ave. Grants Pass, OR

When: June 27th, 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Brooks McLain, Development Director for HIV Alliance, is available for interviews and will be onsite in downtown Eugene throughout the Block Party. They can also be reached at 541-510-1038 or bmclain@allianceor.org to arrange an interview.

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