

# NATIONAL HIV TESTING WEEK

1-7 FEBRUARY 2021

## HIV PREVENTION ENGLAND

**National HIV Testing Week starts  
on Monday 1 February 2021**

**National HIV Testing Week** is a campaign to promote regular testing among the most-affected population groups in England. Regular testing helps to reduce the number of people living with undiagnosed HIV and those diagnosed late.

This year, the campaign returns with the successful creative **'Give HIV the finger: a finger-prick test is all it takes'**.

The campaign will encourage people to test for HIV at home during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are inviting organisations to participate by running online campaign events, providing virtually-assisted testing opportunities, and promoting at-home HIV testing, and prevention awareness with our support.

### Why National HIV Testing Week is important

The number of people diagnosed with HIV is falling, but there is still work to do:

- 1 in 16 people with HIV are unaware they have it and spend an average of three to five years not knowing, increasing the risk of passing HIV on to sexual partners<sup>1</sup>.
- Late diagnosis rates are still stubbornly high – 42% of people were diagnosed late in 2019. This correlates to poorer long-term health outcomes and leads to an eightfold increased risk of death<sup>2</sup>. Clinical reviews show many could have been diagnosed sooner<sup>3</sup>.

1

2

3 Public Health England (PHE), 2020, Trends in HIV testing, new diagnoses and people receiving HIV-related care in the United Kingdom: data to the end of December 2019. Available from: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/939478/hpr2020\\_hiv19.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/939478/hpr2020_hiv19.pdf)

Dr Ranj Singh  
ITV's This Morning



**A finger-prick test is all it takes.**

### Why you should get involved

- Local Authority leaders and sexual health services play an important role in the health of their local communities and populations, and community-based organisations are experienced and well-placed to promote testing, reaching people who might not attend traditional healthcare settings.
- You have an important opportunity to prevent late diagnosis and link those who are diagnosed into care at an early stage.
- You may also play a vital role in supporting people who receive an HIV diagnosis, and help ensure they are signposted to clinical, peer support or advocacy services.

## Key Campaign Messages for National HIV Testing Week 2021

- Testing for HIV is quick and easy, all it takes is a finger-prick test.
- People can live with HIV for a long time without any symptoms, testing is the only way to know your HIV status.
- If you have HIV, finding out means you can start treatment, stay healthy and avoid passing the virus onto anyone else.
- Testing for HIV is still possible despite COVID-19 restrictions. You can test at home using HIV postal and self-test kits. These are safe and confidential, and enable you to take a test at your own convenience.
- Anyone diagnosed with HIV in the UK can access free treatment and support.

## CAMPAIGN PROMOTION AND RESOURCES

**National HIV Testing Week** campaign promotion begins **11 January 2021** across multi-channels including outdoor advertising, digital and social media, press coverage and influencer engagement. People will be able to order a test from this date from the national HIV and self-sampling service.

To adapt to the increase and prioritisation of online outreach, digitised resources will be available from the portal this year, as well as some physical assets for those who still require them.

### Available now:

- Order information resources and merchandise: [hperesources.org.uk](https://hperesources.org.uk)

### Coming soon (January 2021):

- Download the **National HIV Testing Week** social media pack: [hivpreventionengland.org.uk](https://hivpreventionengland.org.uk)
- Don't forget to share our social media assets and your local events using **#HIVTestWeek**.
- We would love to hear from you about your National HIV Testing Week 2021 plans. Please email [hpe@tht.org.uk](mailto:hpe@tht.org.uk) for help facilitating events or for more information or support.

## TO DO LIST

### TO DO LIST

- ✓ Order and use **National HIV Testing Week 2021** branded resources and merchandise.
- ✓ Organise online events as part of virtual outreach initiatives to promote HIV testing at home in your local area.
- ✓ Organise local publicity to raise awareness and explain the benefits of testing.
- ✓ Invite your local MP, mayor and other public figures and influencers to test or pledge their support.
- ✓ Download and use **National HIV Testing Week 2021** social media assets.
- ✓ Use these to promote the 'When to Test', 'Test Finder' and 'Which Test' tools available on the [startswithme.org.uk](https://startswithme.org.uk) website.
- ✓ Invite your partner organisations, including educational and health bodies, as well as Social Services and other groups, to take part in **National HIV Testing Week 2021**. They can do this by promoting the digital information and services on the [startswithme.org.uk](https://startswithme.org.uk) website through their own social media channels.
- ✓ Are you based in a high or very high prevalence area? Visit the PHE 'Fingertips' tool to find out the HIV and sexual health needs of your area: [fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/sexualhealth/](https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/sexualhealth/)
- ✓ **National HIV Testing Week** provides the perfect opportunity to update colleagues' knowledge of the most recent national data and best practice recommendations for HIV testing and prevention:
  - PHE: [gov.uk/government/collections/hiv-surveillance-data-and-management](https://gov.uk/government/collections/hiv-surveillance-data-and-management)
  - NICE: [nice.org.uk/guidance/ng60](https://nice.org.uk/guidance/ng60)
  - BHIVA: [bhiva.org/HIV-testing-guidelines](https://bhiva.org/HIV-testing-guidelines) (newly published in 2020)

This campaign is produced by Terrence Higgins Trust for **HIV PREVENTION ENGLAND**

HIV Prevention England is the Government-funded national HIV prevention programme for England.

To find out more about our work visit: [hivpreventionengland.org.uk](https://hivpreventionengland.org.uk)

The HIV and sexual health charity for life

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Public Health  
England

