



Eastern Idaho Public Health

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 28, 2016

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World AIDS Day is December 1, *Free HIV Testing Available* *AIDS Memorial Quilt to be Displayed in Idaho Falls*

EASTERN IDAHO – World AIDS Day is observed on December 1 of every year and is dedicated to raising awareness of AIDS caused by the spread of HIV infection. Every year, events take place across the country to raise awareness and show support for people living with HIV/AIDS.

In recognition of World AIDS Day, Eastern Idaho Public Health (EIPH) will be offering **free** confidential rapid HIV tests to encourage residents of eastern Idaho to know their HIV status. If you have ever had unprotected sex or shared needles, you could have been exposed to HIV. There's only one way to know – **GET TESTED!** The schedule for FREE, confidential testing is listed below. Please call and schedule an appointment.

EIPH Office Location:	Date of Testing:	For appointment, call:
Bonneville County	Saturday, December 3, 2016 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	(208) 525-7245
Bonneville County	December 5 – 9, 2016	(208) 525-7245
Clark County	All month – December 2016	(208) 374-5216
Custer County	All month – December 2016	(208) 879-2504
Fremont County	All month – December 2016	(208) 624-7585
Jefferson County	All month – December 2016	(208) 745-7297
Lemhi County	All month – December 2016	(208) 756-2123
Madison County	All month – December 2016	(208) 356-3239
Teton County	All month – December 2016	(208) 354-2220

The rapid HIV test is similar to a pregnancy test, using blood from a finger stick instead of urine. It provides results in about 15 minutes. If test results are reactive, blood will be drawn from the patient for a second test for confirmation.

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HIV stands for human immunodeficiency virus. It is the virus that can lead to acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, or AIDS. Unlike some other viruses, the human body cannot get rid of HIV. That means that once you have HIV, you have it for life.

HIV is spread through contact with the blood, semen, vaginal fluids, or breast milk of an infected person. Sharing syringes and needles can expose a person to blood infected with HIV. Infected women can pass the virus to their babies during pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding.

Early detection of HIV infection reduces the potential that a person may unknowingly spread HIV. "It is recommended that everyone gets tested for HIV at least once. Detecting HIV, like other diseases, can lead to better health outcomes if found early," says Nikki Sayer, EIPH's Reproductive Health Program Manager.

In addition, the AIDS Memorial Quilt will be on display for the public to view at the Elks Lodge (640 E. Elva – Idaho Falls). This is a **free** event. The dates and times the quilt is available for viewing are listed below.

- Tuesday, November 29 - Noon to 8 p.m.
- Wednesday, November 30 - Noon to 8 p.m.
- Thursday, December 1 - Noon to 8 p.m.
- Saturday, December 3 - Noon to 7 p.m.
- Also on Saturday, December 3 at 5:30 p.m. there will be a dedication of new panels for the National Names Project Memorial AIDS Quilt

The AIDS Memorial Quilt is an enormous quilt made as a memorial to and celebration of the lives of people who have died of AIDS-related causes. Each 3' by 6' panel is the size of a human grave. Since the quilt is so large, it is not displayed in its entirety. The AIDS Memorial Quilt display in Idaho Falls is one of the larger quilt displays in the country. The quilt is a solemn reminder of the devastation that the HIV/AIDS epidemic has had on our country.

If you have any questions about HIV, AIDS, World AIDS Day or the AIDS Memorial Quilt, please contact Mimi Taylor at 533-3151. Information can also be found on the following website: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/>.

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