Get Tested for HIV and STIs at Home, for Free

Rates of sexually transmitted infections are expected to rise. Know your status with TakeMeHome's free HIV and STI test kits.

April 6, 2021 By Trent Straube

April is National STD Awareness Month, so what better time to have one of TakeMeHome's free test kits for HIV, chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis delivered to your home?

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a decline in testing for sexually transmitted infections (STIs, also referred to as sexually transmitted diseases, or STDs). Not only did COVID-19 cause many clinics to close, but many of their health care workers also had to redirect their efforts to battling the new pandemic. As a result, experts are predicting a rise in HIV and STI rates. For more about that, see "How Coronavirus Shutdown Could Cause an Uptick in HIV Cases."

Even though clinics are now reopening, many people either don't feel safe to return to them or prefer the privacy of their own home for HIV and STI testing. Thanks to TakeMeHome.org, free home testing is available to more people across the country.

NASTAD continues to partner with Building Healthy Online Communities and TakeMeHome on a free HIV and STD test kit home...

Posted by NASTAD on Wednesday, March 24, 2021

To get the word out about the free home test delivery program, TakeMeHome partnered with HIV and sexual health organizations, including NASTAD, which represents HIV and hepatitis health care leaders; Building Healthier Online Communities (BHOC); the San Francisco AIDS Foundation; and the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University.

The home test program is simple. Go to TakeMeHome.org and complete a form to see whether

you're eligible. If you are, in one to three days, you will receive a discreet package including instructions, swabs, a lancet for performing a finger stick and a card for collecting samples. Several private companies provide the tests. The OraQuick HIV in-home tests, for example, are provided by OraSure Technologies. (Watch the company's how-to video at the top of this article; instructional videos for throat and rectal swabs are posted on TakeMeHome.org.)

The HIV test provides results in 20 minutes. The other tests require that samples be mailed in. Once the samples are received, users will be emailed instructions on how to log on to a portal to view their results.

A Spanish version of the TakeMeHome tests will be available in April.

TakeMeHome reports positive test results to the local health department, just as clinics and doctors do.

> Today, we announced the launch of a free HIV/STD test kit home delivery program, #TakeMeHome. By working with health departments to provide them for free, TakeMeHome can get more tests to people who need them the most.https://t.co/Z3eJPJipFU pic.twitter.com/tlmWZxpa5Q
>
> — BHOC Partners (@BHOCPartners) March 15, 2021

Through the collaboration with BHOC, the test kits are promoted on dating apps such as Grindr, Adam4Adam, Grindr, Jack'd, Scruff and Manhunt. "We at Grindr are proud to be a major partner of TakeMeHome and promote it to our users," said Grindr's director of marketing, Alex Black, in a NASTAD press release about the tests. "We know that encouraging our users to get tested for both HIV and other STDs is a crucial step in promoting our community's health."

"Regular testing is one of the most important tools we have for reducing HIV and STD transmission," added Stephanie Cohen, medical director at San Francisco's City Clinic. "Public health and dating apps working together to make it accessible to more people makes total sense."

In related news, POZ Personals has collaborated with BHOC in the past. For more, see "Queer Dating Apps Come Together for Fighting Online Stigma in NiceAF Campaign."

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