Why Should You Get Tested for HIV?

June 27, 2011 By Hydeia Broadbent

Stop and think, how many sexual partners have you had who were unaware of their own status? It's estimated that more than one million people are living with HIV in the United States. (We say "estimated" because many people are not getting tested for the virus.)

It's also estimated that more than 18,000 people in the United States die each year from complications related to AIDS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The fact is while there is hope, people are still dying from this epidemic. Why? Because too many people become aware of their status when it's too late for life-saving medications to be effective.

My reason for writing this blog is because today is National HIV Testing Day. This day is important because it helps bring awareness to the fact that people should get tested. On this day we stress how important being tested for HIV is for those who are unaware of their HIV status.

Sure, AIDS is no longer feared like it once was in the late '80's when death was all around us; when you could look at someone and tell they had AIDS. The new generation has no sense of fear when it comes to the possibility of living life with AIDS. People who are now living with the disease live longer and look healthier than ever, due to scientific advancements in developing effective medications. As a result, many people think if you contract HIV treating the condition is as easy as popping a once-a-day pill.

But, no, it isn't. Just ask anyone living with HIV or AIDS--like me.

While you should not fear anyone who is living with AIDS, what you should fear is the outcome of your behavior if you choose to take part in sexual activities with someone whose HIV status is unknown to you or that person.

Here's my plea to your common sense. Please get tested for HIV. Show how much self-love you have by knowing your HIV status. Think of it this way: Knowing your status doesn't only prove how much you care for yourself; it also reflects what type of person you choose to be.

The bottom line is there's no way around this fact: Not knowing your HIV status and having unsafe sexual relationships means you could possibly infect others. Is that something you really want to do?Ã□Â¢Ã¢Â‚Â¬Ã‚Â¨

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