

June 8, 2009

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MEDIA NOTE: A listing of all HIV/AIDS Network of Sarasota County sponsored HIV testing opportunities is provided at the end of this release.

June 27 is National HIV Testing Day – take control, take the test

Member agencies of the HIV/AIDS Network of Sarasota County (HANS) will offer free HIV testing to the public at numerous locations from June 22 to 30 as part of the 15th annual National HIV Testing Day observance. “Many people who are HIV positive do not even know it. Early diagnosis is the key. When I learned that I was HIV positive 20 years ago, I made positive lifestyle changes. Today, my quality of life is good even with HIV in part because of the early diagnosis and treatment,” said Valerie Wojciechowicz, a Sarasota resident who educates and advocates for women living with HIV.

The two greatest risk factors for HIV infection are having unprotected sex and sharing needles or syringes. If you have never been tested, or have had unprotected sex or shared a needle since your last test, now is the time to get an HIV test. Knowing your HIV status can help you get into medical treatment earlier, take steps to stay healthy, and keep from spreading the virus to others.

HIV testing is fast and easy. People have a choice of getting the OraSure® HIV test or a traditional blood test. OraSure® testing consists of placing a treated cotton pad resembling a toothbrush between a person’s cheek and gums for two minutes. It is easier than brushing your teeth. Those who go to Community AIDS Network (CAN) sponsored HIV testing sites will receive the Rapid Ora Quick HIV Test, a finger stick, which provides preliminary test results in only 20 minutes. Test results are always kept private and are not shared with anyone, including family members, significant others, employers or landlords.

Sarasota County Health Department officials offer additional recommendations to reduce risk for HIV infection:

- **Be Safe:** The best way to prevent HIV is to abstain from having sex. If you do have sex, use a new condom every time. Do not share needles or syringes for any reason, whether to inject drugs (recreational or medical) or for tattoos and body piercing.
- **Talk About It:** Talk about sex and HIV with your partners. Find out when they were last tested for HIV and what their status was.
- **Talk to Your Doctor:** If you are sexually active, you should get tested for HIV at least once. Do not assume your doctor will ask you to be tested for HIV. Women who test positive should get treatment during all pregnancies and not breastfeed their babies.
- **Spread the Word:** Talk to others about getting tested. HIV is primarily spread through four fluids, semen, vaginal fluids, blood and breast milk.

The Florida Department of Health Bureau of HIV/AIDS recently released a report discussing the disproportionate impact that HIV/AIDS has had on black women. For 15 consecutive years, HIV/AIDS has been the leading cause of death among black women ages 25-44 in Florida. The report is accessible on the Bureau’s website, http://www.doh.state.fl.us/disease_ctrl/aids.

For more information on local HIV testing opportunities, call the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 or visit the HANS website www.hiv Sarasota.org

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**Sarasota County National HIV Testing Day Activities
June 22 – 30, 2009**

Free Rapid HIV Testing (preliminary test results available in 20 minutes)

Monday, June 22; 9:30 a.m. to Noon

Orange Ave. Housing Authority Property – Health In Motion Mobile Medical Unit

1912 N. Orange Ave., Sarasota 34234

Contact: Sarasota County Call Center; 941-861-5000

Sponsoring Organization: Sarasota County Health Department

Free Rapid Ora Quick HIV Testing – Get results in 20 minutes

Monday, June 22; 1 to 3 p.m.

La Canasta Market

2268 Fruitville Road, Sarasota 34237

Contact: Sarasota County Call Center; 941-861-5000

Sponsoring Organization: Sarasota County Health Department

Free Rapid HIV Testing (preliminary test results available in 20 minutes)

Tuesday, June 23; 9:30 a.m. to Noon

Englewood Goodwill Center

410 Indiana Ave, Sarasota 34223

Contact: Sarasota County Call Center; 941-861-5000

Sponsoring Organization: Sarasota County Health Department

Free Rapid HIV Testing (preliminary test results available in 20 minutes)

Tuesday, June 23; 1 to 3 p.m.

Englewood Helping Hands

700 E. Dearborn St., Englewood 34223

Contact: Sarasota County Call Center; 941-861-5000

Sponsoring Organization: Sarasota County Health Department

Free Rapid HIV Testing (preliminary test results available in 20 minutes)

Tuesday, June 23; 3 to 6 p.m.

Location: Selby Goodwill GoodNeighbor Center

1781 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Sarasota 34234

Contact: John Perez 941-366-0461; Johndavid@cccsrq.org

Sponsor: Community AIDS Network

Free Rapid HIV Testing – (preliminary test results available in 20 minutes)

Wednesday, June 24; 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Wal-Mart Super Center

17000 Tamiami Trail, North Port 34287

Contact: Sarasota County Call Center; 941-861-5000

Sponsoring Organization: Sarasota County Health Department

Free Rapid HIV Testing (preliminary test results available in 20 minutes)

Wednesday, June 24; 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Location: Community AIDS Network

1231 N. Tuttle Ave., Sarasota 34237

Contact: John Perez 941-366-0461; Johndavid@cccsrq.org

Sponsor: Community AIDS Network

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Sarasota County National HIV Testing Day Activities – PAGE TWO

Free HIV Testing – Walk-in/No appointment

Friday, June 26; 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Location: South County Family Health Center (entrance is just north of Manatee Community College)

7820 S. Tamiami Trail, Venice 34293

Contact: Elizabeth Smit 941-861-3381

Sponsor: Sarasota County Health Department

Free HIV Testing – Walk-in/No appointment

Thursday, June 25; 12 noon to 4 p.m.

Location: North Port Health Center

6950 Outreach Way, North Port, FL 34287

Contact: Deborah Pilcher/Leah McCallister 941-548-0100

Sponsor: Sarasota County Health Department

Free Rapid HIV Testing (preliminary test results available in 20 minutes)

Thursday, June 25; 9:30 a.m. to Noon

Salvation Army – Health In Motion Mobile Medical Unit

1400 Tenth St., Sarasota 34236

Contact: Sarasota County Call Center; 941-861-5000

Sponsoring Organization: Sarasota County Health Department

Free Rapid HIV Testing (preliminary test results available in 20 minutes)

Thursay, June 25; 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Location: Community AIDS Network

1231 N. Tuttle Ave., Sarasota 34237

Contact: John Perez 941-366-0461; Johndavid@cccsrq.org

Sponsor: Community AIDS Network

Free OraSure HIV Testing

Friday, June 26; 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Resurrection House

507 Kumquat Ct., Sarasota 34236

Contact: John Perez 941-366-0461; Johndavid@cccsrq.org

Sponsor: Community AIDS Network

Free HIV Testing, Education/Safer Sex Discussion and Refreshments

Friday, June 26; 2 to 5 p.m.

Location: ALSO Out Youth

1470 Boulevard of the Arts, Sarasota 34231

Contact: Stephen Warne 941-951-2576

Sponsor: ALSO Out Youth

Free HIV Testing, Speakers and counseling at Men’s “Walk Worthy” Conference

Friday, June 26 and Saturday, June 27; 5 to 9 p.m.

Location: Vicinity of Second Chance Last Opportunity

1933 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Sarasota 34234

Contact: April Glasco 941-822-1772 or aprilglasco@yahoo.com

Sponsor: Second Chance Last Opportunity

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Sarasota County National HIV Testing Day Activities – PAGE THREE

Free Rapid HIV Testing – (preliminary test results available in 20 minutes)

Monday, June 29; 9:30 a.m. to noon

Selby Goodwill Jobs Center – Health In Motion Mobile Medical Unit

1781 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Sarasota 34234

Contact: Sarasota County Call Center; 941-861-5000

Sponsoring Organization: Sarasota County Health Department

Free Rapid HIV Testing – (preliminary test results available in 20 minutes)

Monday, June 29; 1 to 3 p.m.

Newtown Estates Park – Health In Motion Mobile Medical Unit

2800 Newtown Blvd., Sarasota 34234

Contact: Sarasota County Call Center; 941-861-5000

Sponsoring Organization: Sarasota County Health Department

Free Rapid HIV Testing (preliminary test results available in 20 minutes)

Tuesday, June 30; 9:30 a.m. to Noon

Goodwill Center – The Rialto

650 S. Tamiami Trail, Venice 34285

Contact: Sarasota County Call Center; 941-861-5000

Sponsoring Organization: Sarasota County Health Department

Free Rapid HIV Testing (preliminary test results available in 20 minutes)

Tuesday, June 30; 1 to 3 p.m.

Habitat for Humanity Retail Store

1400 Ogden Road, Venice 34285

Contact: Sarasota County Call Center; 941-861-5000

Sponsoring Organization: Sarasota County Health Department

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