
HEALTH DEPARTMENT
NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Health Department Offers Free Walk-in Testing Opportunities in
Recognition of World Aids Day 2015**

GRAND RAPIDS, MI. - More than one million people in the United States are living with HIV according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. As the Kent County Health Department (KCHD) prepares to recognize World Aids Day on Tuesday, December 1, 2015 we are offering several opportunities for testing, along with a gift card for those who get tested. The simple finger poke test can yield preliminary results in about 20 minutes. During that time our Personal Health Services certified counselors provide advice on protecting yourself and others from HIV.

KCHD is offering four opportunities to get tested, without an appointment, free and confidentially. When you get tested at one of these events you will receive a gift card*, education about HIV prevention and steps you can take to protect those you love from HIV. (Gift cards are only available while supplies last.)

Monday, Nov. 30: 1 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. South Clinic, 4700 Kalamazoo Ave. SE, Kentwood

Tuesday, Dec. 1: World AIDS Day, 8:15 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Health Department 700 Fuller NE, Grand Rapids

Wednesday, Dec. 2: 1 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Sheldon Clinic, 121 Franklin SE, Grand Rapids

Thursday, Dec. 3: 1 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. North Clinic, 4388 14 Mile Rd. NE, Rockford

"The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Kent County Health Department recommend that everyone know their HIV status," says Adam London, Administrative Health Officer for the Kent County Health Department. "This knowledge is essential for getting helpful therapy and for protecting others from the virus."

HIV, Human Immunodeficiency Virus, attacks the cells that make up the body's immune system. HIV can make it difficult for an infected individual to fight off colds and other diseases. There are many medications available today that can strengthen the immune system. Left untreated HIV can develop into Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome - AIDS – which can be fatal.

People who are unable to visit one of the four free testing events, can make an appointment by calling 616-632-7171. More Information on HIV and AIDS can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/>.

KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 265 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and three satellite clinics located in Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit www.accesskent.com/health.

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