



# NATIONAL Women and Girls HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY

March 10

# You. Me. WE.

Changing the face of HIV

## What is National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day?

National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NWGHAAD) is an annual, nationwide observance, led by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Women's Health (OWH). Every year on March 10 — and throughout the month of March — local, state, federal, and national organizations come together to shed light on the impact of HIV and AIDS on women and girls and show support for those at risk of and living with HIV. This year marks the 14th annual observance of NWGHAAD.

## Why is National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day important?

HIV and AIDS are still widespread public health issues, and women remain vulnerable to infection — especially African-American and Hispanic women.<sup>2</sup> In fact, any woman who has sex can get HIV, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, or sexual orientation. Today, over 1 million people in the U.S. are diagnosed with HIV,<sup>1</sup> and nearly 1 in 4 of them are women.<sup>1</sup>

The 2020 NWGHAAD theme, “*HIV Prevention Starts With Me: Ending the HIV Epidemic Together*,” emphasizes the role everyone plays in HIV prevention—community organizations, health care professionals, and women and men, including those living with HIV. There are steps you can take to protect yourself, your partner, patients, your family, and your neighbors.

- Get an HIV test, which is free and confidential. To find a location, visit [gettested.cdc.gov](https://www.gettested.cdc.gov).
- Prevent HIV by using a latex condom every time you have sex.
- If you are HIV-negative and your partner has HIV, talk to a doctor about **taking pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)**, a daily pill that can **reduce your risk of getting HIV from sex by more than 90%**. Find a provider near you at [PrePlocator.org](https://www.PrePlocator.org)

At the end of 2018, there were 37,968 new cases of HIV in the United States. 19% of these new cases were women.<sup>3</sup>



The majority of new HIV cases at the end of 2018 were among women ages 20-30.<sup>4</sup>



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- If you are living with HIV, talk to your doctor about ways to stay healthy and take your medication as prescribed to achieve and maintain an **undetectable viral load**. It can help prevent spreading HIV to your sexual partner or if you are pregnant, to your baby.
- If you think you may have been exposed to HIV, visit a doctor or nurse right away. The doctor may decide that you should get **post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP)**. PEP is an anti-HIV medicine that you take within 72 hours of possible exposure to HIV to lower your chances of getting HIV.
- If you are a health care professional, you should know the **screening guidelines**, talk to patients about their risk, and encourage patients living with HIV to adhere to treatment.

### Who should participate in National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day?

Any individual or organization can observe National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. OWH invites public and private organizations at the local, state, and national levels to participate.

### How do I observe National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day?

You can plan a National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day event; spread the word on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, or Tumblr about the day; and use the hashtag #NWGHAAD on social media. Use **these materials** to get started.

<sup>1,2</sup> CDC. (2018). *Diagnoses of HIV Infection in the United States and Dependent Areas, 2018 (Preliminary)* (PDF, 10 MB). <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/library/reports/surveillance/cdc-hiv-surveillance-report-2018-preliminary-vol-30.pdf>

<sup>3,4</sup> CDC. (2018). *HIV and Women*. <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/group/gender/women/index.html>

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For ideas on how you can show your support for women and girls affected by HIV and AIDS, visit [womenshealth.gov/nwgheed/resources](https://www.womenshealth.gov/nwgheed/resources).



Learn more about HIV/AIDS and women's health at [www.womenshealth.gov/hiv-and-aids](https://www.womenshealth.gov/hiv-and-aids).

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