Greetings,

Since 1988, the world has observed World AIDS Day on December 1 as a way to remember those we've lost to AIDS-related illness, show support for people living with HIV, and unite in the fight to end HIV/AIDS once and for all.

Globally, an estimated 38 million people are living with HIV - a fact that’s been made possible by fierce activism that has led to ongoing scientific and social advances. Since the epidemic began in the early 1980s, more than 35 million have died. In the United States, Black communities are disproportionately impacted. Recent data shows that although Black people are only 13% of the US population, we make up 42% of new HIV diagnoses.\(^1\) Black communities see a higher proportion of new diagnoses and of people living with HIV than any other racial or ethnic group. This includes people across all sexual and gender identities, though gay, bisexual, and same gender loving men are the most affected.

The inequality that Black people face is compounded within the LGBTQ+/SGL community, from discrimination around jobs to education to housing to healthcare. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated all of this, but together, we can unite in the fight against HIV.

Whether you’re a community leader, a healthcare practitioner, a firefighter, or an elected official, we invite everyone to advocate for accurate information sharing, affirming and accessible care, regular testing, rapid diagnosis, and affordable treatment. Most importantly, we have to remove the stigma and shame that surround HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. We have to start talking - about HIV, about sexual health, and about our wellness in general. We deserve to be well. Education, honesty, acceptance, and love are the key.

To show your support in the fight to end HIV and stand in solidarity with those living with HIV, wear a red ribbon on December 1.

In Love and Continued Struggle,

David J. Johns,
Executive Director, The National Black Justice Coalition

\(^1\) [https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/group/racialethnic/africanamericans/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/group/racialethnic/africanamericans/index.html)
Since the inception of the HIV epidemic in the late 1980s, we’ve made tremendous strides to not only help people live with HIV but also thrive with it. However, the Black community remains vulnerable to infection despite medical, scientific, and social advancement. Black people continue to struggle with the stigmas that prevent us from discussing HIV prevention, treatment, and support. The lack of conversation can have pernicious consequences.

**HIV IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY**

1. In 2018, Black people accounted for 13% of the US population but 42% (16,076) of the 37,832 new HIV diagnoses in the United States and dependent areas. This is a 1% decrease from 2017.
2. Black people account for a higher proportion of new HIV diagnoses and people living with HIV, compared to other races/ethnicities.
3. 1 in 7 Black people with HIV are unaware they have it. People who do not know they have HIV cannot take advantage of HIV care and treatment and may unknowingly pass HIV to others.
4. An estimated 476,100 Black people had HIV at the end of 2016, representing 42% of all people with HIV. Of those, only an estimated 85% were aware of their infection.
5. HIV can only be transmitted through an exchange of body fluids (semen, vaginal fluids, breast milk, blood or pre-ejaculatory fluids). It cannot be spread through physical contact unless you have an open wound which comes into contact with the body fluids of an HIV-positive person.
6. Stigma, discrimination, and homophobia put those at risk for HIV in Black America at risk for many health issues and may affect their ability and access to quality health care, which serves as another barrier to eradicate HIV in Black America.

At NBJC, we are dedicated to ensuring that the Black community receives the advocacy, information, and support needed to make empowered decisions about their health and wellness, including sexual health. Black people are dying as a result of HIV, more than any other racial/ethnic group and this does not have to be our reality. Conversations about prevention, treatment, and support on #WAD2020 must be focused on supporting the Black community as we take charge of our health and bodily autonomy.
ENGAGE

1. **GET TESTED & KNOW YOUR STATUS.** To end the HIV epidemic you must know your status. Get tested regularly (every three to six months). To find a free testing site near you use the testing locator at www.nbjc.org.

2. **DECREASE** the stigma associated with getting tested. Do this by encouraging others to get tested and by knowing the facts about HIV.

3. **HOST AWARENESS EVENTS** within your community to educate, eliminate stigma, encourage testing, and support people living with HIV.

4. **BRING AWARENESS** to the importance of testing, transmission, and treatment for HIV by having conversations with friends and family.

5. **USE DIGITAL ASSETS.** Social media is the quickest way of communicating news and spreading awareness. Use social media as a platform to uplift and to educate family and friends on the importance of HIV awareness. Use the hashtags #StopHIVTogether, #WordsMatterHIV, and #WAD2020.

6. **CONNECT WITH CULTURALLY COMPETENT HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS.** Talking with healthcare providers is one of many first steps to take in ending the HIV epidemic in the Black community. Connect with culturally competent health care providers on your campus or in the community to discuss HIV prevention, treatment, and support.

7. **START TALKING. STOP HIV.** Together, we can educate ourselves and one another in ways that enable Black people to live healthier lives. It is critically important to talk about what you are doing to protect your health and wellness with your partner(s). Discussing HIV can be difficult, which is why NBJC created the **Words Matter HIV Toolkit**. This toolkit includes resources to support Black people in having healthier conversations about holistic health and wellness.
IF YOU KNOW YOU ARE HIV-NEGATIVE, CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING TO HELP KEEP YOU FROM BECOMING HIV POSITIVE.


2. **USING CONDOMS THE RIGHT WAY** every time you have anal or vaginal sex. Use the condom locator to find condoms near you.

3. **NEVER SHARING SYRINGES** or other equipment (or works) to inject drugs.

4. **GETTING TESTED AND TREATED FOR OTHER SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS.**

TALK ABOUT & TAKE ADVANTAGE OF MEDICAL & SCIENTIFIC ADVANCEMENTS.

Medications such as Pre-exposure prophylaxis (or PrEP) and Post-exposure prophylaxis (or PEP) exist to aid in reducing the risk of becoming HIV positive.

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (or PrEP) reduces the risk of getting HIV from sex by 90% and reduces the risk for those who inject drugs by 70%. Using PrEP, as a part of a holistic health regimen, significantly decreases the odds of contracting HIV. Think about PrEP in the same way you think about birth control. Anyone at risk of exposure to HIV should discuss the medicine with a knowledgeable medical provider.

Post-exposure prophylaxis (or PEP) is an antiretroviral medication that must be taken within 72 hours after recent possible exposure to HIV. Think about PEP in the same way that you think about Plan B.

To obtain PrEP or PEP, contact your healthcare provider, an emergency room, or visit your local or state health department. If eligible, the Gilead Advancing Access® co-pay coupon card may help you save on your co-pays for PrEP and PEP. For more information visit: [https://www.gileadadvancingaccess.com/copay-coupon-card](https://www.gileadadvancingaccess.com/copay-coupon-card).
ADDITIONAL LEARNING RESOURCES

Words Matter HIV Toolkit Download

David Johns Educates Us On National Black HIV Awareness + More

NBJC Recognizes National Gay Men’s HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day Toolkit
SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

Feel free to customize the content below. Use the hashtags so we can find and amplify your messages!

#WAD2020 | #WORLDAIDSDAY
#NBJCADVOCACY
#ENDHIVSTIGMA | #ROCKTHERIBBON

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

• Dec 1st is World AIDS Day #WAD2020. Conversations about prevention, treatment, and care help us take charge of our health, which is essential to ending the HIV epidemic in Black communities. #WordsMatterHIV #PACT4HIV

• 1 in 7 Black people living with HIV do not know their status. People who do not know their status cannot take advantage of HIV care and treatment. #WAD2020 #WordsMatterHIV #PACT4HIV

• Stigma, fear, discrimination, and homophobia place Black people at higher risk for HIV. We must combat stigma to save the community. #WAD2020 #WordsMatterHIV #PACT4HIV

• For every 100 Black people living with HIV in 2016 only 48 were virally suppressed. #WAD2020 #WordsMatterHIV #PACT4HIV

• Many people are unknowingly living with HIV. What are you doing to protect your ASSets? #WAD2020 #WordsMatterHIV #PACT4HIV

• More Black Women and Girls are dying as a result of HIV/AIDS than any other racial/ethnic group but it doesn’t have to be this way. Ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Black communities begins with becoming more aware and empowered. #WAD2020 #WordsMatterHIV #PACT4HIV

• Transgender Women in the United States are at high risk for HIV, and half of transgender people diagnosed with HIV are Black. #WAD2020 #WordsMatterHIV #PACT4HIV

Remember to use the campaign hashtags when posting about World AIDS Day!
SOCIAL MEDIA ASSETS

All assets are available for download at
https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/library/awareness/wad.html

We hope the resources within this #WAD2019 toolkit are useful to you as you start or sustain a conversation about or efforts to support HIV prevention, treatment, and support in Black communities. We all have a role to play in HIV advocacy, prevention, treatment, and support. Please continue to consider the National Black Justice Coalition a resource as you engage in this critically important work.