



## Knox County Health Department

140 Dameron Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37917

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### **Free HIV testing offered in honor of National HIV Testing Day**

*Health officials encourage public to know their status*

*Knoxville, Tenn.* — The Knox County Health Department (KCHD) and partner Samaritan Ministry will recognize National HIV Testing Day early this year by offering free, confidential HIV testing at the main health department, 140 Dameron Ave., on **Friday, June 25 from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.** The tests are conducted with a simple finger prick and provide results in 20 minutes. Counseling and referrals are available for participants.

"The CDC estimates approximately 1.2 million people or about 1 in 7 of those infected with HIV do not realize they have the disease, which means they may unknowingly jeopardize their health and the health of their loved ones," said KCHD Senior Director Dr. Martha Buchanan. "Knowing your HIV status is a critical first step in getting life-saving treatment and learning how to protect those closest to you."

"The only way to fail this test is not to take it. HIV testing, which is free and confidential, is the only way to know your status and just one more way to be pro-active about your health," said Samaritan Ministry Founder and Director Wayne Smith. "We are excited to partner with KCHD to make this happen."

The theme of National HIV Testing Day is "My Test, My Way," a phrase designed to motivate people to get tested for HIV in a way that works best for them. HIV testing is available to community members in a variety of ways, including through self-tests available at many pharmacies, area health care providers and the Knox County Health Department. In addition to the June 25 event, KCHD offers confidential HIV testing Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at its main location, 140 Dameron Ave. Call 865-215-5370 and please arrive by 3 p.m. Testing is typically covered as a preventive service with no co-pay by most insurance plans.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) encourages everyone ages 13 to 64 get tested for HIV at least once in their lifetime. Although there is no cure for HIV, getting medical care and taking medicines regularly helps those infected live a longer, healthier life and also lowers the chances of passing HIV to others.

#### **About Knox County Health Department**

The first health department in Tennessee to achieve national voluntary accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is dedicated to ensuring the conditions in which every resident can be healthy. As a chief health strategist for the community and with more than 240 team members, KCHD's broad scope of work includes convening partners to improve community health, identifying community health threats, investigating disease outbreaks, conducting extensive outreach and education, preparing for public health emergencies, providing and connecting the public with medical care, enforcing food safety and air quality laws, and more. For more information, visit [www.knoxcounty.org/health](http://www.knoxcounty.org/health).

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