Township of Manalapan

BOARD OF HEALTH

120 Route 522 • Manalapan, NJ 07726 • 732-446-8345 • Fax 732-446-1576

Website: www.mtnj.org

December is WORLD AIDS DAY

Since the first cases of AIDS were identified in 1981, more than 30 million people have died from AIDS. An estimated 1.7 million people died as a result of AIDS in 2011 alone. Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, shortened AIDS, is caused by HIV. Some people may refer to AIDS as advanced HIV infection. HIV is a virus that gradually attacks immune system cells. As HIV progressively damages these cells, the body becomes more vulnerable to infections, which it will have difficulty in fighting off. It is at the point of very advanced HIV infection that a person is said to have AIDS. If left untreated, it can take around ten years before HIV has damaged the immune system enough for AIDS to develop. Worryingly, many people think there is a 'cure' for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS - which perhaps makes them take risks that they otherwise wouldn't. However, there is still no cure for HIV. The only way to ensure that you avoid AIDS is to be aware of how HIV is transmitted and how to prevent HIV infection. However, people can take antiretroviral treatment, which suppresses the HIV virus. This can prevent them from reaching a point where they are diagnosed with AIDS. Also, in some cases, it is possible for a person who has an AIDS diagnosis to regain a strong immune system with antiretroviral therapy. However, once somebody is diagnosed with AIDS, officially, they keep this diagnosis for life even though in reality an opportunistic infection may be cured or the number of immune system cells (CD4 cells) in their blood may increase to recommended levels.

Signs and Symptoms of AIDS

- Fever
- Fatigue
- Weight loss
- Swollen lymph's cause from HIV
- Sores of the mouth, anus, or genitals

How to Prevent Aids?

There's no vaccine to prevent HIV infection and no cure for AIDS. But it's possible to protect yourself and others from infection. That means educating yourself about HIV and avoiding any behavior that allows HIV-infected fluids — blood, semen, vaginal secretions and breast milk — into your body.

- **Get tested and know your partner's HIV status.** Talk to your partner about HIV testing and get tested before you have sex.
- **Have less risky sex.** Oral sex is much less risky than anal or vaginal sex. Anal sex is the most risky type of sex for the spread of HIV.
- **Use condoms.** Use a condom every time you have vaginal, anal, or oral sex.
- **Limit your number of sexual partners.** If you have more than one sexual partner, get tested for HIV regularly. Get tested and treated for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and insist that your partners do, too. Having an STI can increase your risk of becoming infected with HIV.
- **Talk to your health care provider about pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP).** PrEP is an HIV prevention method that involves taking an HIV medicine every day. PrEP is intended for people who don't have HIV but who are at high risk of sexually transmitted HIV infection. PrEP should always be combined with other prevention methods, including condom use.
- **Don't inject drugs.** But if you do, use only sterile drug injection equipment and water and never share your equipment with others.

For more information contact the Manalapan Township Health Department:

Hours:

Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Location:

Manalapan Town Hall
120 Route 522 & Taylors Mills Road, Manalapan, NJ 07726

Phone: (732) 446-8345
Fax: (732) 446-1576