

NEW JERSEY AIDS/HIV/STD HOTLINE

PRESS RELEASE
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Staying Healthy with HIV: Newly Diagnosed Should Seek Medical Care

(Newark, NJ) – Being newly diagnosed with HIV can be a scary and uncertain time in one's life. As expected, many patients have unanswered questions and concerns after being told they have tested positive for HIV. Years ago, such a diagnosis carried a notion that death was inevitable from the infection. With great strides in early detection and medical treatment, an infected person can expect to enjoy a long, healthy life, but only if he/she makes positive choices to seek medical care and carefully follow a treatment plan. For those newly diagnosed, seeking medical care should be the first step.

The NJ AIDS STD Hotline received a call from a friend of a newly diagnosed HIV positive individual. The friend wanted to get into care but, being a new resident of New Jersey, he did not know where to turn for help. The New Jersey AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline is a great resource for HIV positive individuals trying to manage their infection. A health care professional at the hotline was able to connect the caller's friend to a navigator who got him into care within 24 hours.

In care, patients will learn the benefits and risks of HIV treatment, as well as, how to reduce the risk of spreading HIV to others. Patients and their health care providers work together to make important decisions; for example when to start treatment and what HIV medicines to use. The earlier medical care is started the better. The main goal of treatment is to fight the virus in the body so the person can stay healthy longer. By taking the medicines the way in which they were prescribed, patients give themselves the best chance for the treatment to work and prevent spreading HIV to others.

The New Jersey AIDS/HIV/STD Hotline is staffed by health care professionals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year to help callers find a site for follow-up medical care or with questions and/or concerns regarding HIV diagnosis and infection, treatment options and services, and counseling locations. The staff help link those in need of medical care with the appropriate medical professional. Calls are free and confidential. Contact the hotline either by phone at 1-800-624-2377, text/email at 8006242377@njpies.org, or chat www.njihivstdline.org.