

# HIV IN AMERICA TODAY

HIVHASBEENSTOPPED.COM



## WHY GET TESTED FOR HIV?

By Robert Brandon Sandor  
August 2013.

### INTRODUCTION

The innovative **MSM** (*Men who have Sex with Men*) HIV related socials and private sex parties are focused on our HIV+ and HIV negative gay and bisexual young adults, and empowers them to continue to remain HIV negative (*or not to infect someone*) by

choice. As a result, this community driven international HIV Prevention / Harm Reduction effort will be the springboard for future HIV Prevention messages, strategies, decisions, research, and theories for decades to come.

### **Why get tested for HIV?**

#### **What's the point?**

One of the reasons why you might have put off getting tested for HIV on a regular basis was because you felt alone or afraid. That ended right now. As of this very moment and as you are reading this, so are others. *Therefore, you are not alone.* You are with others and together you can get tested.

#### **Why is it important to get tested for HIV?**

Your desire and motivation to remain HIV negative is the glue that holds all other HIV prevention messages together, the key force that drives local and global cultures to continue to support HIV Prevention. Please take a moment and think about how this information relates to you personally. Consider how this affects the choices you make to remain HIV negative or not to infect someone if you are HIV+, the people you form relationships with socially and sexually, and understand the important role you play in keeping the promise of HIV Prevention.

You must learn to realize the difference your life will be affected just by an HIV test, and understand how much you will benefit as a result of staying HIV negative. Should society stop HIV or stop funding HIV Prevention programs?

**My point is this:** This is the time when enough is enough, the excuses stop and we move forward by understanding how to stop HIV dead in its tracks. Therefore, by getting tested for HIV on a regular basis, you help all of us to stop HIV. But how can you take this step forward and what resources are available to you now?

#### **Three easy steps to remain HIV negative: DECIDE, KNOW, CHOOSE.**

**Step 1: Deciding to remain HIV negative.** *This step you already achieved otherwise you would not be reading this!*

**Step 2: Knowing where to get tested.** There are countless resources available to you

now to get tested for HIV today, and many offer free HIV testing - just locate the one you are most comfortable with. The information for testing locations are found in your local hospital, clinic, university, high school, local health department and online. *It only takes a minute and the benefit of finding one will last a lifetime.*

**Step 3: Choosing a good time to get tested.** How about now? However, "now" might not be the best time, so how about the first of the month? I offered this suggestion to you and the entire HIV negative population to get tested on the first of the month. Why the first of the month? Simple, because you are Number One and you are the future of HIV Prevention. Also, by getting your test on the first of the month, you achieve a great goal - KNOWING. And by knowing your HIV status early, you can better plan the month ahead.

*If you are in high school or college, get tested with your friends, and together you will be creating the foundation of an HIV negative support network!*

- Being HIV+ since 1983 and living through so many changes and challenges in the global HIV Prevention messaging efforts, as well as my own life, I wanted to inject a personal message of my own. A microscopic snapshot, a flicker of reflection of my own thoughts and emotions on the very moment I was told "*Get your affairs in order. You'll be dead by the end of the year*".

### **Why get tested for HIV?**

#### **Who cares and what's the point?**

*Consider this...*

To get what you want in your life and to reach your goals, you need to understand what is stopping you. Regular testing for HIV to remain HIV negative is no exception. Whenever you procrastinate, it's because you think that doing the task or action would be worse than not doing the task or taking action. Sometimes, if you procrastinate too long, it turns against you and you are in a worse situation.

For example, if you continue to put off doing a term paper, your taxes, finishing a project at work or cutting the lawn, you will get to the point where you are required to do it. Even if it's the night before it's due! Talk about a major stress kick to the head. Please take a moment today and consider your future. It's your Future at stake, not mine, I'm already HIV+ (First Generation August 1983) and a cancer survivor but you're

not. So take the time today and think about your HIV negative status and how your life would change if you became HIV positive.

*Consider these...*

- ***Who do you disclose your status to and how would they react?***
- ***What extra medical expenses would you have and could you afford them?***
- ***Does your health insurance cover all HIV related medical issues? Your employers health plan?***
- ***What would your daily routine be like if you became HIV positive? And how would this change what you are doing now?***

*All this changes by one simple task getting an HIV test.*

If you are in high school or college, get tested with your friends, and together you would be creating the foundation of a trusted peer support network!

***Questions to consider together or with friends.***

- ***When is a good time for you to get tested?***
- ***If you are in high school or college, can you get tested before your next class or just after school?***
- ***Is there a place on campus or nearby?***
- ***If you work, can you get tested before going to work or after?***
- ***Can you get tested on your lunch break?***
- ***If you are getting tested alone, does it help knowing that others are getting tested on the first of the month as well?***

*Planning in advance to get tested.*

Just like planning in advance to go to the doctor's office, the movies, the kids soccer game are going to the beach, planning in advance to get an HIV test is just as easy.

***Something to think about or discuss with your friends:*** *What are the four benefits to you by get planning in advance of your HIV testing?*



***Robert Brandon Sandor, FOUNDER***  
*Brandon's POZ Parties - NYC, Brandon's*  
*POZ Socials - NYC, Boy Toys - NY, HIV+*  
*1983, USAF vet 1979 - 1983, Honorable*  
*Discharge, Humanitarian Service medal,*  
*HIV Activist, Author, HIV Innovator*