



Michael R. Pence
Governor

Jerome M. Adams, MD, MPH
State Health Commissioner

This news release was sent out statewide to the media today. All of our news releases are available on the Indiana State Department of Health website at: www.statehealth.in.gov.

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INDIANA STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH INVESTIGATES ADDITIONAL HIV CASES TIED TO SOUTHEASTERN INDIANA OUTBREAK

INDIANAPOLIS—The Indiana State Department of Health is investigating additional cases of HIV in southeastern Indiana. The cases were identified through testing performed through community outreach in response to an HIV outbreak fueled by injection drug abuse.

State health officials announced today that the number of HIV cases in the outbreak is now 181 (177 confirmed cases and four preliminary positive). The most recent cases involve individuals linked to cases previously identified in the outbreak.

“Every case of HIV that’s diagnosed in the state is troubling, but this disease isn’t the death sentence it once was. It is a chronic disease that can be effectively managed,” said Indiana State Health Commissioner Jerome Adams, M.D., M.P.H. “We are encouraged to know that the tools put in place to address the HIV epidemic are working to identify illnesses so we can connect people with treatment and other services that help them live healthier lives.”

State health officials have been working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, local health departments, health care providers and others to contain the spread of HIV in southeastern Indiana. Disease Intervention Specialists continue to interview each newly identified HIV positive individual to obtain information about needle sharing and sex partners, as well as recommending care coordination services, medical care and HIV prevention information.

State health officials recommend that all Hoosiers know their HIV status. The best way for an individual to learn their HIV status is by getting tested by a health care professional. Hoosiers in the southeastern portion of the state, especially individuals who have engaged in high-risk behavior such as needle sharing and unprotected sex, are advised to get tested and then re-tested every two to three months as long as they are engaging in high-risk behaviors because HIV can take up to three months to appear in a person's system.

"Ideally, everyone would know their HIV status and take steps to prevent transmission of the virus," Dr. Adams said. "As we have found in the southeastern Indiana outbreak, not everyone knows their status. Our local health partners continue to perform testing on a regular basis as part of our efforts to halt the spread of disease. We should expect to see additional cases of HIV as a result of those efforts."

To help reduce risk of HIV infection, avoid:

- injection drug use;
- sharing or re-using needles or works;
- engaging in unprotected sex; and,
- engaging in sex with commercial sex workers.

For HIV testing locations and information about HIV Care Coordination, individuals are encouraged to call the HIV Services Hotline at (866) 588-4948.

Individuals seeking help with substance abuse should call the national 24-hour addiction hotline at 1-800-662-HELP (4357). This hotline provides confidential, free, 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year information service, in English and Spanish, for individuals and family members facing mental health and/or substance use disorders. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups and community-based organizations. Callers can also order free publications and other information.

To learn more about the link between HIV infection and drug abuse, visit the National Institute on Drug Abuse at <http://hiv.drugabuse.gov/index.html>.

Visit the Indiana State Department of Health at www.StateHealth.in.gov. Follow the Indiana State Department of Health on Twitter at [@StateHealthIN](https://twitter.com/StateHealthIN) and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/isdh1.

Hoosiers who do not have health care coverage or access to a doctor are encouraged to check availability for the new Healthy Indiana Plan—HIP 2.0—by visiting www.HIP.IN.gov or calling 1-877-GET-HIP-9.

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