

# World AIDS Day theme - Think Positive, Rethink HIV

World AIDS Day on 1 December is an opportunity to unite in the fight against HIV, show support for people living with HIV and remember those who have died. This year's theme, Think Positive, Rethink HIV, is challenging all to rethink outdated stereotypes, challenge myths and be positive about HIV.



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"Unfortunately we are still fighting the battle to break the stigma and discrimination surrounding HIV," says a spokesperson for Clinix Health Group.

Stigma and discrimination can be as devastating as the illness itself and may mean abandonment by a partner or family member, social exclusion, job and property loss, and violence. The fear of these and other consequences means that people are less likely to come in for HIV testing, disclose their status to others, and adopt HIV preventative behaviour or access treatment, care and support.

"Every sexually active South African is at risk of contracting HIV. Fortunately, the reality is that people living with HIV can have full and happy lives. We need to know our status and start treatment as soon as possible to ensure the best possible outcomes."

The testing process is a quick and painless one and can be done at most hospitals or clinics. Along with the actual testing,

there are support structures in place to offer counselling and advice on treatment and healthy living.

"If you don't know your status, now is the time to find out. If you know someone is living with HIV and needs support, give it. Let's work together to break the stigmas around HIV and AIDS and start the new year in a positive way."

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