

Native American Health Messenger

Your Wellness Connection

Phoenix Indian Medical Center

February 2005

Getting Tested for HIV/AIDS

HIV (the human immunodeficiency virus) is passed from one person to another by having sex with or by sharing syringes and needles with someone who is infected with the virus. This virus is the cause of AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome), a disease which can kill if left untreated.

It takes years before the virus causes enough health problems so that the infected person finally knows he/she is sick. Meanwhile, his/her sexual or needle partner(s) have been exposed to this deadly virus. It is very important for people at risk of getting the HIV virus to be tested. The reasons for getting tested are (1) if infected with HIV, early treatment can delay illness and lengthen life, (2) pregnant women, if infected, can be treated to prevent their unborn children from having AIDS, and (3) if infected, you can make plans to prevent giving your sexual or needle partners this virus.

Those most at risk for getting the HIV virus include: anyone having unprotected sex with more than one partner, men having sex with other men, sharing syringes and needles to take illegal drugs, and becoming drunk (people do foolish things when drunk, like having sex without protection). If you fall into one of these "at risk" groups, you should be tested for the HIV virus.

Is everyone going to know I am being tested? Before being tested, the HIV counselor will talk to you about having the test done confidentially or anonymously. Information about HIV testing is highly protected by law, so no one can get this information without your permission.



Confidentiality means that no one that takes care of you (the doctor, nurse, lab technician, clerical person) is allowed to tell anyone else about your test or the fact you even came in for the test. *Anonymous* testing means that no one knows who you are; therefore any information they have cannot be traced back to you.

Confidential testing can be done at the Phoenix Indian Medical Center. Clinic hours are from 8 am to 12 noon and 1 pm to 4 pm on Tuesdays and 1 pm to 4 pm on Thursdays. HIV counseling and testing is done by appointment or on a walk-in basis. To schedule an appointment or for more information, call 602-263-1200 and ask for nurses Rita Lookingglass, Shirley Tracey, or Erica Avery. Preliminary test results are available in 20 minutes; final results are available in 2 weeks.

Anonymous testing can only be done at the Maricopa County Public Health Center, 1825 East Roosevelt, Phoenix, between 8 am to 5 pm on Mondays and Tuesdays and between 8 am and 12 noon on Wednesdays. Call 602-506-1678 for an appointment. Preliminary test results are available in 20 minutes.

Counseling is required. Counseling is done to help you figure out if you are at risk for HIV, to help you understand the test and what the results mean, and to help you reduce your risk or get treatment if you are infected. Counseling takes about 20 to 40 minutes. If you decide to get tested, expect another 20 to 40 minutes.

Did You Know . . . about ways to make your life more peaceful?

A lot of things we enjoy can actually increase the stress in our lives. These things include televisions, radios, telephones, cell phones, video games, airplanes, cars, and more. Each one brings pleasure to our lives; each one adds pressures and burdens to our lives. Think about it! If we didn't hear so many terrible things on the TV and radio news, we might believe life is better than we think. Phone calls, especially now that cell phones abound, interrupt us day and night bringing requests of one kind or another. Because we can, we feel pressured to visit family during the holidays!

Many of us think we have to "have it all" and "do it all." But this isn't necessarily true! Make some rules for your life so that you and your family can feel more at peace. Here are some "rules" you might consider: (1) Don't answer the phone at dinnertime. (2) Don't answer the phone after a certain hour in the evening. (3) Unless your job requires that you be in constant touch, leave your cell phone at home occasionally. (4) Play board games with family or friends instead of video games. (5) Watch less violent TV shows and movies; increase the comedies you see. (6) Learn to say "no" to invitations you don't really want to accept. (7) "If I can't pay cash, I can't afford it" is the best way to avoid financial stress. Buying on credit (other than your house or car) is good for the credit card companies, the banks, mortgage companies, and the retailers who sell you things (they make money each time you use credit), but you end up owing money, and often more money than you think.

Car Safety — Living to See Another Day!

When it comes to dying from automobile crashes, the four main causes include: drunk drivers, sleepy drivers, not using seat belts, and distracted teen drivers. When you drive down the street, have you ever thought to yourself, "I don't know how I make it safely home every night!" The secret is to be a "defensive" driver. Be aware of what other drivers are doing: in front of you, on each side of you, and behind you. Watch for pedestrians, too! Concentrate on the job at hand: driving! Don't drink and drive; don't let your kids get in a car with someone who has been drinking. Don't drive if you are sleepy; pull over to the side of the road and take a nap if needed. Always use your seat belt, even for short drives (most car crashes happen within 30 miles of home). Don't let your teen drive if there will be more than one other teen in the car (when there are several teens in the car, there are a lot of distractions, and a teen driver doesn't have enough experience to filter out these distractions).

Resources

Talking Circle in PIMC Conference Rooms A and B. Conducted by Native American Connections every Wednesday evening at 7 pm.

Breastfeeding classes at PIMC. For more information, call the PIMC breast feeding hotline toll free at 1-877-868-9473.

Stop Smoking Classes at PIMC. For more information, call 602-2882 X110.

Sweat Lodge behind PIMC held on the last Friday of every month at sundown for men, and the last Thursday of every month for women.

Parenting Skills Building; a 12-week court-approved program for parents of children ages 3-12. 2:00 to 5:00 pm; at the Native American Community Health Center, 3008 North 3rd Street, Suite 310, Phoenix. Cost: \$50 per family for the 12-week session. Scholarships are available. Free child care provided. Contact Roy Johnston at 602-279-5262 for the dates.

Care and Training of American Indian Children Ages Birth to Five Years, for American Indian parents. A 4-week program, one and one-half hours each week. Sponsored by American Indian Family and Youth Services. To register, please call 602-487-0119.

Bonding with Babies at the Century Branch Library, for babies through age 2 and their care givers. Songs, books, rhymes, and flannel board stories. 30 minutes a week. For more information about dates and times, call the Phoenix Public Library Century Branch and ask for the reference desk.

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The *Native American Health Messenger* is published monthly by the Phoenix Indian Medical Center Office of Planning. Please contact Roberta Arthur, Public Relations, at 602-263-1576 or e-mail at roberta.arthur@mail.ihs.gov if you wish to submit articles for publication, suggest topics to be covered in future issues, or for more information about the services, programs, and field initiatives of the hospital. Or, you may write: Phoenix Indian Medical Center, Administration/Planning, 4212 North 16th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85016.

NEWS FLASH!

- ✓ Polio (a crippling disease that can kill) is no longer seen in the U.S. because of the polio vaccine ("shot").
- ✓ Small pox (another killer) is no longer seen anywhere in the world because of the small pox vaccine.
- ✓ Hospitalization rates for chicken pox dropped 74% between 1995 and 2001. The chicken pox vaccine was first offered in 1995.
- ✓ The rate of acute hepatitis B in children and teens decreased 89% from 1990 (when the hepatitis B vaccine first became available) to 2002.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

1/29-30. **Mesa Indian Art Show**, Mesa Convention Center (outdoors at Rendevous Green), 201 North Center Street, Mesa. 9 am to 5 pm. 480-332-2531.

1/30-2/13. **American Indian Expo and Indigenous International Arts Festival** at the Exposition Center at Irvington Road and Palo Verde (I-10 exit #264) in Tucson. For more information, call 520-622-4900 or go to www.usaindianinfo.org

2/3. **Native Parenting Series** at PIMC. These monthly parent education sessions include speakers, videos, and talking circles and are held the first Thursday of every month from 10 to 12 noon in the Behavioral Health Conference Room. For more information, call Connie at Behavioral Health at 602-263-1200 X1014.

2/5-6. **9th Annual Indian Artists of America Show**, 11 am - 6 pm. Rawhide Pavilion, Rawhide Western Town at Scottsdale and Pinnacle Peak Roads in Scottsdale. 1-866-398-2226 or www.indianartistsofamerica.com

2/5-6. **15th Annual World Championship Hoop Dance Contest**, 10 am - 5 pm. Heard Museum, 2301 North Central Ave, Phoenix. Adults \$7; seniors \$6; children \$3. 602-252-8848 or www.heard.org

2/7-10. **19th Annual National Reservation Economic Summit and American Indian Business Trade Fair**. 1-800-462-2433 X243.

2/18. **Blood drive** at PIMC. To donate blood, call 263-1576 for an appointment.

2/19. **Iwo Jima Landing 60th Anniversary Parade and Ceremonies**; 9 am military fly over; 10 am ceremonies begin. Mathew B Juan Park in Sacaton. 520-562-8484.

3/5. **PIMC Annual Social Pow Wow** on the PIMC grounds at 16th Street and Indian School Road, Phoenix. Cakewalks, Fry bread, Arts and crafts, prize drawings. Bring your own chairs and shade. 602-263-1518 X1797.

3/5-6. **Heard Museum Guild Indian Fair and Market**; 9:30 am to 5 pm. Adults \$10; children \$3; under 4 free. 602-252-8848 or www.heard.org

Immunizations (shots) have saved millions of lives! Beginning at birth, with more doses given before their second birthday, children need to have the following immunizations: hepatitis B; diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough (DtaP); *Haemophilus Influenzae* Type b; inactivated polio (IPV); measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR); chickenpox (Varicella); and Pneumococcal vaccine (PCV). Flu vaccine is now recommended for all children between 6 and 23 months of age and, in certain areas of high risk, hepatitis A vaccine may be recommended. For more details, talk with one of the health providers in Pediatric Clinic or check with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) by calling 1-800-232-2522 or check their Internet site at www.cdc.gov

Shots Are for Grownups, Too!

Grown ups, too, need some shots. Everyone needs a tetanus and whooping cough (Td) booster every 10 years. Annual flu shots are recommended for persons 65 years of age or older and for adults under 65 who have chronic health problems such as diabetes or heart disease. Pneumococcal vaccine is also recommended for those 65 and older, but only one dose. People who have not had chicken pox or been immunized for chicken pox may want to consider having the chicken pox vaccine. The same goes for mumps, measles, and rubella (MMR); if you have not been immunized and you have not had these infections as a child, you may wish to get the MMR shot.

Hepatitis B vaccine is recommended for people in the following groups: health care workers likely to be exposed to blood, certain travelers, dialysis patients, men who have sex with men, people who have more than one sex partner in six months, people who inject illegal drugs, and household members and sexual contacts of persons infected with hepatitis B.

Hepatitis A vaccine is recommended for some international travelers (including those traveling to Mexico), persons living in communities with high rates of hepatitis A, men who have sex with men, street drug users, recipients of certain blood products, and persons with chronic liver disease.

Certain adults should be vaccinated against meningococcal disease including those planning to travel to a part of the world where this disease is common, those with certain health conditions (such as a damaged or absent spleen), and college freshmen living in dormitories.

For more information, talk to your health care provider.



Letter from the Director

All Americans are living longer and healthier lives than ever before! Advancements in health care such as immunizations against certain infectious diseases, increased knowledge in the sciences and medicine, and improved environmental controls have made this happen.

At this time, the greatest threat to our health, happiness, and life is our own behavior and choices! In the year 2000, the most common **actual causes of death** were tobacco (435,000), poor diet and physical inactivity (400,000), alcohol consumption (85,000), infectious diseases (like flu and pneumonia, 75,000), pollutants (like asbestos, etc, 55,000), motor vehicle crashes (43,000), firearms (29,000), and illegal use of drugs (17,000). Actual causes of death are defined as lifestyle and behavioral factors such as smoking and physical inactivity that contribute to this nation's leading killers, including heart disease, cancer, and stroke.

We must be actively involved in our health and our health care choices! PIMC doctors and health care staff can help by teaching us what we need to know about our health and by providing us with support and medications when necessary.

Together, we can improve our community's and our family's futures! On behalf of all the staff of PIMC, have a healthy and prosperous 2005!

John Meeth, Acting CEO, PIMC

For Kids Only!

The PIMC Safety Bears want you to be happy. What does "be happy" mean? And, how do people "get happy"?

Feeling happy means that you feel good about yourself and about your life *most* of the time! You enjoy *most* of the things you do! You like more people than you don't like! You don't have a lot of fears (for example, you worry a little, not a lot).

Here are some examples of things that can make people happy: (1) playing games, (2) doing something well, like doing well in school, (3) learning something new, like swimming or ice skating, (4) being around happy people, (5) helping others, like doing the dishes at home or helping to clean the blackboard at school, and (6) finishing something you started, like taking the 6 months of piano lessons you promised your Dad.

You may not believe this, but the harder something is to do, the happier you will feel when you have done it! An example of this might be someone who is having trouble learning arithmetic. He might not want to do his homework, because it reminds him of how hard it is. But, she pushes on, asks for extra help, does her homework, and passes the arithmetic test!

Happy New Year!

Healthy Living

As stated in the *Letter from the Director* in this issue, the greatest killers of Americans are smoking, poor diet, and inactivity. We can do something about these things, ourselves, thus improving our health and increasing our life expectancy.

When a person stops smoking, their lungs become healthier, they can breathe easier, do more physically, decrease their risk of cancers, and decrease their risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, and stroke. The November 2004 issue of the PIMC *Native American Health Messenger* was all about how to stop smoking and included resources to help those wanting to stop smoking. To get a copy of the November newsletter or other information about stopping smoking, call 602-640-2882 X 110.

The next most important things we need to do to improve our health is to eat healthier and become more active. Try not to use the words "diet" or "exercise," because these words make grown men shudder. Try not to make huge changes all at once. And don't give up, entirely, your most favorite foods (you will feel cheated)!

Women should eat five servings of fruit and vegetables a day; men should eat nine servings a day. If you do that, you will feel fuller while having eaten less calories. Don't fry foods; bake or broil them. Have low calorie snacks in the house, and make them easy to eat (for example, clean and cut up carrots and celery as soon as you bring them home from the store). Pretzels are better for you than chips! Try sugar-free Jello! Make an appointment with a PIMC dietitian; she can help you plan healthier meals. Remember, keeping your weight close to normal reduces your risk for diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and stroke.

Try parking your car far away from the door at the mall or at your place of work. Take a short walk at lunchtime. In the heat of the summer, go to the mall for a cool walk. Have friends or family members walk with you, for support. Remember, activity always make you feel better; you have more energy and will feel less depressed.