



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 18 is HIV Vaccine Awareness Day

Legacy Community Health infectious disease health professionals are available for comment on need for HIV and AIDS vaccine.

HOUSTON – (May 15, 2023) – Per the [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#), HIV Vaccine Awareness Day is observed every year on May 18 and commemorates U.S. President Bill Clinton’s 1997 declaration that, “only a truly effective, preventive HIV vaccine can limit and eventually eliminate the threat of AIDS.” It recognizes the many volunteers, community members, health professionals, and scientists working together to develop a vaccine to prevent HIV and AIDS.

“This day is a great opportunity to highlight the need for an HIV vaccine and the work that has been done in HIV/AIDS research,” says Jill Jahns, MPH, Public Health Director at Legacy Community Health. “HIV prevention and treatment are vital to ending the pandemic. Getting out and in touch with our communities to make sure they’re aware of their options is just one way Legacy is driving change.”

There are still ways to prevent the spread of HIV, even without an approved vaccine. One of the highly effective methods is PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis), which can be taken both orally or as an injectable to prevent the passing of HIV.

If you have been exposed to HIV, PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis) can prevent HIV if taken up to 72 hours after exposure.

For those living with HIV, taking antiretroviral therapy (ART) is an effective treatment proven to lower one’s viral load to undetectable and untransmittable levels.

PrEP, PEP, and ART may be available through a Legacy provider and at Wellness Bar by Legacy.

[Click here for more on the development of a HIV vaccine](#) as reported by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases/NIAID.

Next month, Legacy will observe **National HIV Testing Day on June 27** and will offer testing at specific locations.

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About Legacy Community Health Services, Inc.:

Legacy Community Health is a full-service health care system comprised of over 50 locations in the Texas Gulf Coast region offering primary and specialty care, as well as pharmacy services. For over 40 years, Legacy has been innovating the ways we provide comprehensive, quality health care services to underserved communities. As the largest Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in Texas and a United Way affiliated agency since 1990, Legacy ensures its services and programs are open to all, regardless of the ability to pay—without judgment or exception. To learn more, visit www.legacycommunityhealth.org.