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## ***NEWS Release***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Get HIV Tested** ***-Take the Test, Take Control-***

**Fort Myers, FL-** Every nine and a half minutes someone becomes infected with HIV. The Lee County Health Department joins community partners county-wide in recognizing June 27, 2009 as National HIV Testing Day, encouraging all citizens to get tested.

The theme of this year's campaign, "Take the Test, Take Control," focuses on the importance of getting tested for HIV and taking steps to protect yourself and your partners. Persons infected with HIV should access and stay in medical care.

Testing for HIV is available in Ft. Myers at the Island Coast AIDS Network at 2231 McGregor Blvd, Saturday, June 27<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, June 28<sup>th</sup>, from 10am -2pm. "Getting tested for HIV is the first step in taking control to protect yourself and your partner," said Kris Thompson, HIV program, Lee County Health Department. "Also, if someone can't attend the testing events this weekend, testing is available year-round through the Lee County Health Department."

Approximately 125,000 Floridians are currently infected with HIV/AIDS, with 20 percent unaware they are infected. The Lee County Health Department recommends testing if a person has participated in unprotected sexual activity or has shared syringes or needles through drug use, tattooing or piercing. Additionally, all pregnant women and children born to HIV-positive women should be tested.

For more information about National HIV Testing Day, please visit the Florida Department of Health's web site at [www.floridaaids.org](http://www.floridaaids.org). For additional information about how to get tested, please contact your primary health care provider or the Lee County Health Department, HIV/AIDS & Hepatitis Prevention & Education Program at (239) 656-2542.

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