



# Living Well North Tyneside

Supporting Health and Wellbeing

**World AIDS Day** is an annual global event dedicated to raising awareness about **HIV and AIDS**, supporting individuals living with HIV, and honouring the memory of those who have lost their lives to AIDS-related illnesses. Established in 1988, it was the first international health day and remains a vital occasion for reflection, education, and action.

## Why World AIDS Day Matters

### 1. **Raising Awareness:**

Despite progress in treatment and prevention, stigma and misinformation surrounding HIV remain significant barriers. World AIDS Day is a time to address myths, promote accurate information, and foster understanding. Globally, over 38 million people are living with HIV, and new infections continue to occur daily. This event is critical in maintaining HIV awareness and ensuring people understand the importance of testing, prevention, and treatment.

### 2. **Advancing Prevention and Treatment:**

The introduction of antiretroviral therapy (ART) has been transformative, allowing many individuals living with HIV to lead long and healthy lives. However, access to these treatments is not universal. World AIDS Day highlights the need for equitable healthcare and funding to ensure lifesaving medicines are available to all, particularly in underserved communities.

### 3. **Breaking Stigma and Building Solidarity:**

Stigma surrounding HIV remains a barrier to testing, disclosure, and treatment. This event reminds us of the importance of compassion and advocacy, creating an inclusive environment for those living with HIV to share their stories and seek support.

## How You Can Get Involved

### 1. **Wear the Red Ribbon:**

The red ribbon is a powerful global symbol of solidarity, awareness, and support for those affected by HIV and AIDS. Wearing it is a simple yet impactful way to show your support.

### 2. **Participate in Local Events:**

Many organisations host vigils, workshops, and community events on World AIDS Day. These gatherings are opportunities to honour lives lost, share knowledge, and take collective action.

### 3. **Spread the Word:**

Use social media platforms to amplify the message of World AIDS Day. Post educational content, share personal stories (if comfortable), or use hashtags like #WorldAIDSDay, #EndHIV, and #RedRibbon to encourage engagement and conversation.

### 4. **Support Advocacy and Research:**

Donate to organisations like the National AIDS Trust, Terrence Higgins Trust, or UNAIDS, which work tirelessly to support individuals living with HIV, fund medical research, and fight for policy changes to end the HIV epidemic.

### 5. **Educate Yourself and Others:**

Learn about HIV prevention, testing, and treatment. Share this knowledge with your family, friends, or workplace to help dispel myths and foster understanding.

## Progress and Challenges

While significant strides have been made in the fight against HIV, challenges persist:

- **Progress:** Medical advancements like ART allow individuals to live healthy lives and reduce the risk of transmission to near-zero levels. Global initiatives like UNAIDS' 95-95-95 targets aim to ensure that by 2030, 95% of people living with HIV will know their status, 95% of those diagnosed will be on treatment, and 95% of those treated will have suppressed viral loads.
- **Challenges:** In some parts of the world, access to healthcare remains limited, and stigma continues to deter people from seeking testing or treatment. Addressing social inequalities and investing in healthcare infrastructure

are essential to overcoming these obstacles.

## Honouring Lives and Building a Better Future

World AIDS Day is also a time to remember those who have passed away from AIDS-related illnesses. By reflecting on their stories, we are reminded of the urgency to continue the fight for a future free of HIV and AIDS.

## Resources and Support

If you want to learn more or get involved, here are some useful resources:

**National AIDS Trust:** A UK charity dedicated to shaping policy and providing support for those affected by HIV.

**Terrence Higgins Trust:** The UK's leading HIV and sexual health charity.

**UNAIDS:** A global leader in the fight against AIDS, offering extensive information on prevention, treatment, and policy.

**World Health Organisation:** HIV/AIDS: A comprehensive resource on HIV and AIDS from the WHO.

## Join the Fight

This 1st December, let's unite in the fight against HIV, show solidarity with those living with the virus, and advocate for a future free of stigma and discrimination. Together, we can create a world where HIV is no longer a public health threat.

## Related Links

- [World Aids Day](#)

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