

 **WE GET
TESTED**

***4th edition of International
Testing Week
20 to 26 November 2023***

***Stepping up testing to bring an
end to the HIV epidemic!***



Coalition PLUS organizes the 4th edition of International Testing Week

International Screening Week is a global campaign to raise awareness and promote screening for HIV, hepatitis, and sexually transmitted infections. Taking place from 20 to 26 November 2023, this 4th edition will be launched in Kuala Lumpur in partnership with the Global Fund, UNAIDS and the Malaysian Ministry of Health.

Around 5.5 million people do not know they are living with HIV.

According to UNAIDS, by 2022, 14% of infected people did not know their HIV status, and we know that without screening, the people concerned cannot access antiretroviral treatment. We also know that an HIV-positive person who is tested early and is on antiretroviral treatment has a similar life expectancy as the rest of the population and does not transmit the virus.

Besides the difficulties faced by key populations in terms of stigma, the various health and political crises we are experiencing around the world are an additional barrier to access to screening and care, which means there is a risk of a resurgence in the HIV epidemic worldwide.

With this in mind, Coalition PLUS is mobilising more than a hundred organisations around the world for the 4th edition of the International Screening Week. Tests for HIV, hepatitis, sexually transmitted infections, and even some HPV-related cancers will be offered free of charge in 50 countries. It will take less than 15 minutes to get tested and find out your HIV status.

Progress in the fight against HIV, but difficult access to testing and prevention

Forty years after its discovery in 1983, there is still no preventive vaccine nor treatment to cure HIV. Even so, current treatment enables people diagnosed early to have the same life expectancy as the rest of the population, to live normally, to work and to have children.

For the last ten years, a preventive treatment known as PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) has also protected against HIV infection. And yet, according to

Mehdi Karkouri, President of Coalition PLUS, *“the fact that vulnerable, marginalized and isolated populations are alienated from health services makes early access to testing and prevention tools difficult.”*

Dedicated programs developed with and for the populations most affected by HIV, such as community sexual health centres, help significantly improve their access.

International Testing Week is an opportunity to reach out to populations, provide information on HIV and STIs and remind everyone of the importance of regular screening. In the event of a positive result, people are accompanied and referred for medical treatment.

About Coalition PLUS

Founded in 2008, Coalition PLUS is an international coalition of community-based NGOs in the fight against AIDS.

As part of a community-based approach, Coalition PLUS campaigns to ensure that people infected with, affected by or particularly vulnerable to HIV and HCV are involved in decision-making, implementation and evaluation processes for the health programmes that affect them. Committed to the rights and health of key populations affected by the epidemic, Coalition PLUS operates in 55 countries with some one hundred civil society organisations, within the framework of 10 regional, thematic and linguistic networks. Its work focuses on community screening, sexual health services, harm reduction, community research, advocacy and capacity building. Since 2022, Coalition PLUS has been chaired by Professor Mehdi Karkouri.

About the International Testing Week

International Testing Week is a global campaign that promotes testing for HIV, hepatitis, Sexually Transmitted Infections, and some HPV cancers, organized for the fourth year running by Coalition PLUS, an international coalition of community-based NGOs established in 53 countries. This campaign notably aims to make up for the decline in the number of tests carried out worldwide since the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic. It also brings to light the importance of community-based actors from populations affected by HIV in improving access to testing.

[More information on International testing week](#)

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