



113 Harding Way East  
Galion, OH 44833  
Phone 419.468.1075  
Fax 419.468.8618

DRAFT.     Not for release.     Approved for release by: Trish Factor

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**Message status:**

Urgent     Confidential     For information only     Reply requested

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**Message Title:** Testing and Early Treatment Make HIV a Manageable Chronic Disease

**Message:**

1.2 million Americans are living with HIV.

Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a virus that attacks the immune system, leaving the body unable to fight off disease. It is spread through contact with infected bodily fluids, though early diagnosis and treatment can keep the virus at bay.

Individuals at high risk of contracting HIV are those engaging in sex with a HIV-positive partner or sharing needles.

New treatments have redefined life with HIV. Patients adhering to their medication, one tablet a day for the rest of their life, can prevent the onset of AIDS and live long, healthy lives. PrEP, a daily medication taken by partners of HIV-positive individuals that reduces 90% HIV risk from sex, has enabled HIV-positive individuals to get married and have children.

Insurance and assistance programs are helping HIV-positive individuals afford their medication.

Symptoms of HIV include rapid weight loss, continuous fever, fatigue, swollen lymph glands, extended diarrhea, memory loss, pneumonia, and neurological disorders. Awareness of these symptoms and early diagnosis of HIV can keep the virus from progressing.

However, one in eight Americans with HIV are not aware of their diagnosis.

The Galion City Health Department's Sexual Health Clinic offers HIV testing and treatment. Call the health department at (419) 468-1075 to schedule an appointment for HIV, and other important STIs, testing.

