



DATE: March 28, 2024

TO: Southern Nevada District Board of Health Members

FROM: Fermin Leguen, MD, MPH, District Health Officer *FL*

SUBJECT: District Health Officer Report

World TB Day

The Southern Nevada Health District called attention to the global impact of tuberculosis as it commemorated World TB Day on Sunday, March 24. Across the globe, 1.6 million people died of TB and another 10.6 million became ill with the disease in 2021. While global efforts to combat TB have saved an estimated 74 million lives, the COVID-19 pandemic and other factors have reversed years of progress.

The United States has one of the lowest TB disease case rates in the world, but data indicate the number of TB disease cases nationwide grew 5% in 2022, to 8,300 cases. Nevada has reached a 10-year high in TB disease cases, with a 40% increase in TB disease incidence from 2022 to 2023.

In Clark County, the Health District investigated 76 active cases of TB in 2023, up from 54 in 2022, and reported six TB-associated deaths. The Health District tested 1,656 people for the disease, nearly triple the 584 tested in 2022.

Given the Health District's recent large-scale TB investigations, World TB Day's focus on the ongoing epidemic and highlight of the need to detect and treat those with TB is a timely reminder that too many people still unnecessarily suffer from the disease.

TB is caused by the *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* bacterium, which can be spread through the air when infected individuals cough or speak. The bacteria usually attack the lungs, but TB bacteria can attack any part of the body such as the brain, spine or kidney.

Not everyone infected with TB bacteria becomes sick. In fact, most people will develop latent TB infection (LTBI), a condition in which the bacteria can live in the body without ever making a person sick. However, in other people, especially those with weak immune systems, the bacteria can cause active TB disease, which can be deadly if not identified and treated appropriately.

As the leading provider of TB services in Southern Nevada, the Health District's [Tuberculosis Treatment and Control Clinic](#) offers comprehensive care to ensure that people with active TB disease or LTBI are treated and that those exposed to someone with active TB disease are properly evaluated.

For more information about World TB Day, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/tb/worldtbdays/>.

National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, a day to support women and girls who are living with HIV while encouraging others to be tested for HIV, was commemorated on Sunday, March 10 this year. Locally, an observance of the day, in collaboration with the Southern Nevada Health Consortium, was held on Monday, March 11, at The Center, 401 S. Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89101. During “It’s Tea Time,” attendees had access to information and resources about women and HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). In addition, there were discussions about the following topics:

- Women and PrEP.
- Sex, Pleasure, and Hygiene.
- Personal experiences of living with HIV and being on PrEP.

In Clark County, 77 women and girls had new HIV diagnoses in 2022, compared to 57 in 2021. This reflects a rate of 6.5 new diagnoses per 100,000 in 2022, which was a slight increase from the rate of 4.8 new diagnoses per 100,000 in 2021. On a national level, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that women accounted for 19 percent (6,999) of the 36,801 new HIV diagnoses in the United States in 2019. Women ages 25 to 34 had the highest number of new HIV diagnoses, and Black/African American women continued to be disproportionately impacted by HIV.

HIV testing gives women and girls an opportunity to learn their status so they can take steps to protect their health and help prevent infection in others. Routine testing is recommended for women who are at a high risk of infection. Free HIV testing is available in the Arlene Cooper Clinic at The Center, Monday through Thursday from 1 – 6 p.m. and on Fridays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Appointments are preferred, but walk-ins are accepted.

Additionally, Express HIV Testing is available Monday through Thursday from 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. at the Southern Nevada Community Health Center Sexual Health Clinic, 280 S. Decatur Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89107. Appointments are not required, but clients must be asymptomatic. Additional testing can be done for syphilis, gonorrhea and chlamydia. Visit the Sexual Health Clinic page on the SNHD website for more information.

The Health District also offers free, at-home HIV tests through its Collect2Protect program. At-home tests for chlamydia and gonorrhea are available for a fee. The kits are available on the Health District’s Collect2Protect page and provide a convenient and private testing option.

Early diagnosis is critical for people with HIV so that they can benefit from antiretroviral therapy (ART). ART reduces HIV levels in the bloodstream, reduces HIV-related illnesses, and lowers the risk of transmitting HIV to intimate partners. With ART, HIV-positive people can remain healthy for many years.

According to the CDC, only 10 percent of women who could benefit from PrEP were prescribed the medication in 2019. PrEP is a medication that can be provided to people who do not have HIV but are at a high risk of infection. When taken as prescribed, PrEP is highly effective for preventing HIV. For more information about women and PrEP, visit the CDC’s Let’s Stop HIV Together web page. For additional information about National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, visit the CDC’s website at National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day | Awareness Days | Resource Library | HIV/AIDS | CDC.

Diabetes Resources

The Health District is calling attention to the seriousness of diabetes while urging people to get tested for the disease and learn about free, self-management programs. More than 37 million Americans have diabetes, the eighth leading cause of death in the U.S. and the primary cause of kidney failure, lower limb amputations and blindness. People with diabetes also face a higher risk of developing serious complications from flu and COVID-19.

An estimated 269,783 people in Nevada, or nearly 11 percent of the adult population, have been diagnosed with diabetes, and an additional 70,000 people have the disease but don't know it. An estimated 18,749 Nevada residents are newly diagnosed with diabetes every year. The prevalence of diabetes among adults in Clark County is currently 9.8%, equivalent to 234,342 residents. This marks a 15.4% increase in adults with diabetes since 2011.

Throughout the year, the Health District's Office of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion offers free diabetes self-management, education and support classes. Classes, taught in English and Spanish, are available in person or online. People wishing to participate can fill out the [diabetes self-management workshop form](#) to be placed on a waiting list for future diabetes workshops.

Other [programs and resources](#) include the Road to Diabetes Prevention, the Health District's online diabetes prevention program, which is available in English and Spanish at no cost on the Get Healthy Clark County and Viva Saludable websites or by calling (702) 759-1270. Additionally, the Nevada Diabetes Directory, which provides information about classes, prevention, low-cost clinics, specialists and support groups is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) on the Get Healthy Clark County website.

The Health District also offers organized tours of a grocery store to learn about food labels, healthy dietary choices and meal planning. Guided by a registered dietitian, the tours (available only in Spanish) are designed around key departments where shoppers can boost their intake of healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables, dairy, whole grains and more. Upcoming tours are scheduled for April 22 at 10 a.m. and May 21 at 5:30 p.m. at Marketon Supermarket, 840 N. Decatur Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89107. Space is limited and registration is required. Call (702) 759-1270 or email vivasaludable@snhd.org.

The Health District urges people to take the diabetes risk test at [60-Second Risk Test for Type 2 Diabetes | ADA](#) to find out if they are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes. For more information on diabetes, including risk factors, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [Diabetes Basics | CDC](#).

Influenza Season

Influenza surveillance in Clark County includes data collected from local acute care hospitals and other health care providers. In Clark County, as of March 2, 2024, there have been 949 influenza-associated hospitalizations and 72 deaths reported. The percentage of emergency department visits and urgent care clinic visits for influenza-like illness (ILI) decreased from 4.2% in week 8 to 3.9% in week 9. Influenza A has been the dominant type circulating. Of the patients reported through the U.S. Outpatient Influenza-like Illness Surveillance Network (ILINet), 4.1% were due to respiratory illness that included ILI. This percentage was above the national baseline of 2.9%. Among 55 states and jurisdictions, the respiratory illness activity level in the state of Nevada is low.

In keeping with CDC guidelines, the Health District strongly recommends everyone 6 months of age and older get the vaccine. It is especially important for those at higher risk of developing serious complications from the flu, including people 65 years of age and older, as well as those with underlying medical conditions. It is also important to protect people more likely to be exposed to both flu and COVID-19, including health care workers.

Flu surveillance in Clark County for the 2023-2024 influenza season begins October 1 and runs through May 18. The weekly Influenza Surveillance Snapshot and Influenza Report by Age Group is available on the Health District's website.

Community Meetings

Week ending 03/03:

Quarterly:

- Participated in the State Board of Health meeting

Professional Development/Conferences:

- Attended the Big Cities Health Coalition (BCHC) Winter Meeting

Week ending 02/25:

Monthly:

- Participated in the individual Southern Nevada District Board of Health Agenda Review meeting with Scott Nielson, Mayor Pro Tempore Brian Knudsen, Mayor Hardy, Mayor Pro Tempore Scott Black Councilman Jim Seebeck, Councilwoman Pattie Gallo
- Participated in the Southern Nevada Community Health Center Governing Board meeting
- Participated in the Clark County Medical Society (CCMS) Board of Trustees meeting
- Participated in the Southern Nevada District Board of Health meeting

Media/Interviews/Panelist/Presenter/Events:

- Participated in the Las Vegas Review-Journal Diversity Sources Committee Panel Discussion for Black History Month

Professional Development/Conferences:

- Attended the "February Nile: Overcoming challenges, Achieving Success: Vaccination Efforts in Black America" webinar

Ad-hoc Meetings:

- Attended a meeting with Julia Peek, Deputy Administrator, DHHS

Week ending 02/18:

Monthly:

- Participated in the individual Southern Nevada District Board of Health Agenda Review meeting with Commissioner Kirkpatrick and Commissioner Segerblom

Annually:

- Facilitated the New Board of Health Member Orientation for Mayor Joe Hardy and Councilman Jim Seebeck

Professional Development/Conferences:

- Attended the "Addressing HIV Provider Burnout: Strategies for Well-Being and Resilience Workshop" facilitated by the Pacific AIDS Education and Training Center-Nevada
- Attended the State of the Public Health Union" webinar facilitated by the American Public Health Association

- Attended the “Introduction to Qualtrics Part 1: Survey Design” facilitated by UNLV School of Medicine

Ad-hoc Meetings:

- Attended the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Health and Human Services meeting

Week ending 02/11:

Monthly:

- Attended the Big Cities Health Coalition (BCHC) Monthly Member Call

Bi-monthly (every two months):

- Participated in the Medical Advisory Board meeting

Professional Development/Conferences:

- Attended the “HCV Elimination: Can the US be Free of HCV” webinar

Ad-hoc Meetings:

- Attended the Reviewer Rating to review applicants for the Class of 2028 at the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine

Week ending 02/04:

N/A