

## UC San Diego School of Medicine taps 92103 and 92104 Zip Codes for First Comprehensive Test and Treat Campaign

*UC San Diego Leads the Way in Research for New HIV Strategy That Can Prevent HIV Acquisition and Transmission*

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The University of California, San Diego School of Medicine is making strides toward implementing the world's first comprehensive "test and treat" model of HIV prevention through its "Lead the Way" campaign. The campaign, which will be implemented from April through December 2011, aims to have all adult in San Diego's 92103 and 92104 zip codes answer the question, "Would you or wouldn't you take an HIV test?"

"Scientists are working hard to develop a vaccine for HIV, but progress is slow," said Susan Little, MD, professor of medicine in UCSD's Division of Infectious Diseases and lead researcher of "Lead the Way." "UC San Diego researchers want to show that we can reduce the spread of HIV now, even without a vaccine. HIV testing is easy, confidential and is the simplest way to help our local community fight the spread of HIV/AIDS."

Testing the entire 92103 and 92104 communities is the first step in a multiple year project to demonstrate that, with appropriate testing and HIV treatment, HIV can be controlled within a community. Increasing evidence supports the idea that if everyone in the world were encouraged to be tested for HIV at least once in their lives; if HIV positive individuals were all offered treatment in the form of antiretroviral medications; and if high-risk individuals continued to be tested once each year, the risk of HIV acquisition and transmission could be markedly reduced.

"Lead the Way" research aims to find out whether or not people will test for HIV if the test is made readily available.

"This is the first time an HIV campaign has targeted everyone – both high- and low-risk individuals – based on the presumption that if everyone is tested for HIV, those found to be HIV positive can be treated with antiretroviral medications, reducing the spread of the disease to others," said Little.

Pending Institutional review and approval, the Lead the Way campaign is expected to launch on May 11, 2011 with a testing center located at 3830 Park Blvd., inside The Egyptian building on the corner of University and Park in Hillcrest. The center will offer free ten-minute HIV testing from noon to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays. Free parking is available across the street in the parking lot next to Urban Grind. For those who want to participate, but do not want to take the test, there is an option to take a brief survey.

On June 8, 2011, "Lead the Way" will launch a mobile testing campaign. Trained HIV testers from UCSD's Antiviral Research Center will begin visiting residential locations in randomly selected parcels throughout the two zip codes. Through the rest of the year, this mobile testing team will offer people in the 92103 and 92104 zip codes the opportunity to either have a finger-prick test implemented in their home or in the mobile testing room – with results delivered on-the-spot in ten minutes – or the alternate option of taking a brief survey.

Over the course of 2011, Lead the Way hopes to visit thousands of homes in the 92103 and 92104 zip codes and also set up mobile testing sites at a variety of events and venues throughout the target zip codes.

To learn more about the project, find a mobile testing site or get involved, visit [LeadTheWaySD.com](http://LeadTheWaySD.com), or follow the project on social media at [www.Facebook.com/LeadTheWaySD](http://www.Facebook.com/LeadTheWaySD) [↗](#) and [www.Twitter.com/LeadTheWaySD](http://www.Twitter.com/LeadTheWaySD) [↗](#).

## **ABOUT HIV**

**Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is the virus that causes acquired immunodeficiency syndrome or AIDS. Although antiretroviral medication is not yet universally available, in the last five years, expansion of antiretroviral therapy programs has helped to reverse the tide of AIDS deaths and new infections in many parts of the world. UC San Diego researchers have played a leading role in development and testing of antiretroviral drugs to treat HIV.**

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