

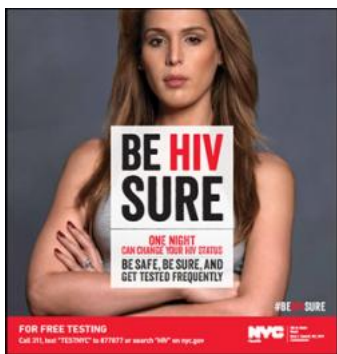
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NYC's New HIV Prevention Campaign Targets Transgenders

by Winnie McCroy
EDGE Editor
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A new public health campaign launched by the New York City Department of Health is targeting transgender people by featuring them in subway and bus ads promoting HIV prevention. Working under the tagline "We Play Sure," the campaign seeks to raise awareness of condom use and PrEP to prevent HIV.

"We looked at folks who are getting HIV and made sure that we had people who look like them," said Dr. Demetre Daskalakis in an [article](#) in DNA Info. The ads feature a wide range of sexual and gender orientations, include a gay white couple, transgender model Carmen Carrera, a heterosexual black couple and a black woman.

Daskalakis, who made his name several years ago by going out to sex clubs to inject gay men with the meningitis vaccine at the height of the outbreak in 2013, curbing that outbreak, is now NYC's head of HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control.

He said that condoms are "really good thought not infallible," but added that "if people who are potentially at risk use PrEP, they can reduce their risk by 90-plus percent."

It's a "a sex-positive strategy really encouraging people to combine things," said Daskalakis, who explained that the tagline "Play Sure" was a play on the word "pleasure," to promote the idea that safer sex is more pleasurable sex.

The campaign also comes with a giveaway: a small kit that can hold condoms, lubricant, and HIV meds or PrEP.



(Source: www.nyc.gov)

The New York Times [reports](#) that Daskalakis got the idea for the kit last summer, when a 22-year-old black man recently diagnosed with HIV walked in to see him at Mount Sinai Hospital, carrying a container that looked light a slightly oversized compact, carrying these items.

"I thought, you know, this is brilliant," said Daskalakis. He took a picture of the case and, when he joined the health department, he sent the photograph to an industrial designer. The kit will be distributed throughout the city early next year.

This is all part of a broader initiative to promote PrEP PrEP, the method of using HIV drugs in a single pill like Truvada, to keep from getting the virus. The CDC has said that PrEP, when used consistently, can reduce the risk of HIV infection by up to 92 percent. And a San Francisco study released in September showed that among 600 high-risk people, those who took Truvada regularly for two and a half years remained HIV free.

Winnie McCroy is the Women on the EDGE Editor, HIV/Health Editor, and Assistant Entertainment Editor for EDGE Media Network, handling all women's news, HIV health stories and theater reviews throughout the U.S. She has contributed to other publications, including The Village Voice, Gay City News, Chelsea Now and The Advocate, and lives in Brooklyn, New York.




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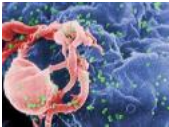
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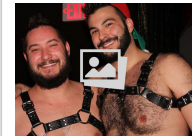
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