

## New Recommendations for HIV Screening

**Essential reading...even for those who consider themselves low-risk** *By Paul Edgecomb, MD*

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) have recently developed new recommendations for HIV testing that apply to most Americans. HIV has been around since the early 1980's. Although considerable progress with regard to testing and treatment has been made and HIV is no longer the rapidly fatal disease that it used to be, it is still present and a major health risk.

People in the "traditional" high-risk groups have been able to reduce their rates of HIV considerably. The major concern these days is that those who do NOT consider themselves high-risk are harboring HIV but are unaware that they have it, allowing it to continue to spread throughout low-risk populations.

### Who is considered high risk (read this carefully)?

- Anyone who uses IV drugs
- Gay and bisexual men

## New Help For Tinnitus

Tinnitus is a sensation in the ear that does not have an acoustic source outside of the body. People who have this disorder complain of a sound in their ear (or ears) that is constant or occasional and most often sounds like ringing or static. For many, it's an annoyance but for some it is a serious problem that can negatively affect quality of life.

According to audiologist Deborah Blaylock, MS, CCC-A, there is some good news for tinnitus sufferers. "A program called Zen now used in Widex brand hearing aids, works to alter an individual's reaction to the tinnitus so that it no longer has a negative effect on your life."

She encourages anyone who thinks they may have tinnitus or any other hearing problem, to schedule a hearing test. As a reminder, free hearing screenings and a presentation on hearing loss and tinnitus, are scheduled for Saturday October 15th from 9:30 to noon at 9150 W. Indian School Road, suite 118. RSVP to 602-938-6960 or email [cube1@thunderbirdim.com](mailto:cube1@thunderbirdim.com).

- (NEW) Anyone who has a new sexual partner since their last HIV test
- Anyone whose sexual partner has HIV or falls into any of the above categories

### What can be done?

We encourage everyone to follow the new CDC recommendations which include:

- Those at high risk should still be screened at least yearly.
- Those at lower risk, up to age 64, should get at least one HIV test during their lifetime with repeat testing performed on an "as needed" basis. The most common situation would be a change in sexual partner, which temporarily puts you into a "high-risk" group.
- Pregnant women should be tested at least once during every pregnancy.

The next time you come in for an office visit, be sure to ask if you should be tested.



## Welcome Dr. Thomas!

Dr. Sherri Thomas, a graduate of the Banner Good Samaritan Internal Medicine residency program, joined Thunderbird Internal Medicine in August. A fan of travel, baking and reading, she is passionate about building a long-lasting and respectful bond with all her patients. She is seeing patients at the 5620 W. Thunderbird Road, #F-1 office.