

HOTLINES, CRISIS LINES AND WEB SITES

While many of your HIV-related needs can be anticipated, there may be times when you unexpectedly need services. However, since most providers only operate weekdays during business hours, you may need alternate services.

This is when hotlines, crisis lines and Web sites can be useful tools. Take time to familiarize yourself with these resources so you can easily access them if the need arises.

It is very important you be sure your information source is legitimate, whether this information is gained in person, over the phone, over the internet or otherwise. It is also important that you safeguard your personal information to prevent it from being abused.

What are hotlines?

Hotlines are usually toll-free telephone services that accept calls from anyone, anytime or during specified hours. Hotlines are staffed by professionals who can provide assistance on a specific topic, usually while preserving the caller's anonymity.

Types of assistance provided by hotlines include:

-Information: Hotline staff should always be able to provide you with the most up-to-date information available on the topic

-Referrals: Hotline staff can most likely provide you with referrals to service providers

-Counseling: many hotlines are set up to provide immediate, one-on-one counseling

What Are Crisis Lines?

Crisis lines, like hotlines, are usually toll-free telephone services that accept phone calls from anyone at anytime or during specified hours.

Crisis lines are usually staffed by certified professionals who can provide emergency aid, immediate one-on-one counseling or referrals. A caller's anonymity is usually assured.

What are Web sites?

Web sites provide a vast range of information about HIV/AIDS that can be viewed by anyone with Internet access.

Many providers have Web sites that describe the nature and range of their services. Familiarize yourself with a provider's Web site before phoning or making an appointment in order to save you time and trouble.

Web sites are also powerful research tools for keeping up with the new knowledge gained on HIV/AIDS every day.

Web sites also provide an opportunity to network with others who share your issues and concerns.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

-For the most up-to-date Hotlines, Crisis Lines and Web sites listing visit www.hivla.org

-Call AIDS/HIV Nightline, (800) 273-2437 or visit www.AIDSinfo.nih.gov

-Call AIDSinfo, (800) 448-0440

-Call 2-1-1 LA County Info Line, (800) 339-6993