

The AIDS Epidemic At 20 Years: SELECTED MILESTONES

On June 5, 1981, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued its first warning about a relatively rare form of pneumonia among a small group of young gay men in Los Angeles, which was later determined to be AIDS-related.

Over the past 20 years, there have been many milestones in the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Each of us has our own history that no single set of milestones can adequately reflect. Yet, certain events stand out. They captured public attention, causing the nation – and indeed the world – to stop and take notice. Some marked incredible displays of courage, anger and commitment. Others were more somber, including the loss of so many public figures. Still others highlight an unfinished scientific agenda, and the ongoing challenge of creating policies and programs to both prevent new infections and assist those living with HIV/AIDS.

At the 20-year mark, we stop for a moment to remember these public milestones, as well as the many more personal memories of what it has meant to live through the epidemic. We do so not only to remember, but also to inform America's future response to AIDS, both domestically and globally.

2001

IN THE FIRST SIX MONTHS...

Newly appointed Secretary of State Colin Powell reaffirms U.S. statement that HIV/AIDS presents a national security threat.

Generic drug manufacturers offer to produce discounted, generic forms of HIV/AIDS drugs; several major pharmaceutical manufacturers agree to offer further reduced drug prices in developing countries.

At first ever African Heads of State meeting on AIDS in Abuja, Nigeria, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan calls for a global fund to respond to AIDS in the developing world.

United Nations General Assembly convenes special session on AIDS...

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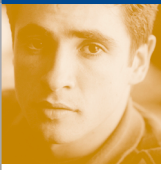
	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985					
EPIDEMIOLOGY/CLINICAL/RESEARCH	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports first cases of rare pneumonia in young gay men, later diagnosed as AIDS-related; one month later, issues report on highly unusual occurrence of rare skin cancer, Kaposi's Sarcoma, among young gay men.	The CDC formally establishes the term Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), and refers to the four "identified risk factors" of male homosexuality, intravenous drug abuse, Haitian origin and hemophilia A.	CDC adds female sexual partners of men with AIDS as fifth risk group. The U.S. Public Health Service issues recommendations for preventing transmission of HIV through sexual contact and blood transfusions. CDC clarifies its use of term "high risk group" and urges that it not be used to justify discrimination or unwarranted fear of casual transmission.	Luc Montagnier of the Pasteur Institute and Robert Gallo of the National Cancer Institute isolate human retrovirus that causes AIDS; later named the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). CDC states that abstinence from intravenous drug use and reduction of needle-sharing "should also be effective in preventing transmission of the virus."	Food and Drug Administration (FDA) licenses first test to identify antibodies to HIV. Blood banks begin screening nation's blood supply. The U.S. Public Health Service issues first recommendations for preventing transmission of HIV from mother to child.					
POLICY/LEGISLATION			The Orphan Drug Act is signed into law, providing incentives to drug companies to develop therapies for rare diseases. First Congressional hearings held on HIV/AIDS.		Pentagon announces that it will begin testing all new recruits for HIV infection and will reject those who are positive.					
ART/MEDIA/CULTURE	<i>New York Times</i> publishes first news story on AIDS.	Increasing use of the term gay-related immune deficiency (GRID) or "gay cancer" by the media and health care professionals mistakenly suggests inherent link between homosexuality and the syndrome.			Rock Hudson announces that he has AIDS and dies later this year. Ryan White, an Indiana teenager who has AIDS, is barred from school; goes on to speak out publicly against AIDS stigma and discrimination. New York production of playwright Larry Kramer's <i>The Normal Heart</i> , first major play about the early days of the AIDS epidemic.					
COMMUNITY/ADVOCACY	The first community-based AIDS service provider, Gay Men's Health Crisis, established in New York City.	City and County of San Francisco works closely with community, including SF AIDS Foundation and Shanti Project, to develop the "SF model of care," which emphasizes home and community-based services.	People living with AIDS (PWAs) take over plenary stage at national conference and issue statement on the rights of PWAs referred to as The Denver Principles. National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA), National AIDS Network (NAN) and Federation of AIDS Related Organizations form. First AIDS Candlelight Memorial held which, by the year 2000, involves 400 cities and towns worldwide.	Small group of AIDS service organizations from across the country forms AIDS Action Council. San Francisco officials order bathhouses closed; major public controversy ensues and continues in Los Angeles, New York and other cities.	First International AIDS Conference held in Atlanta, Georgia, hosted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the World Health Organization (WHO). American Foundation for AIDS Research (amfAR) is founded by Co-Chairs Mathilde Krim and Michael S. Gottlieb, and National Chair Elizabeth Taylor. Project Inform founded to advocate for faster government approval of HIV drugs.					
	cumulative AIDS cases reported in the U.S.	cumulative AIDS deaths reported in the U.S.								
	413	159	827	625	3,064	2,137	7,699	5,655	15,948	12,652

1986		1987		1988		1989		1990	
				World Health Organization (WHO) declares first World AIDS Day on December 1.		AIDS activists stage major protests during the year about AIDS drugs.			
		<p>FDA approves first antiretroviral agent for the treatment of AIDS – Zidovudine or AZT (a nucleoside analog).</p> <p>FDA sanctions first human testing of candidate vaccine against HIV.</p> <p>FDA adds HIV prevention as a new indication for male condoms.</p> <p>Congress approves \$30 million in emergency funding to states for AZT.</p> <p>FDA creates new class of experimental drugs, Treatment Investigational New Drugs (INDs), which accelerates drug approval by two to three years.</p> <p>President Reagan makes first public speech about AIDS; establishes Presidential Commission on HIV (Watkins Commission).</p> <p>U.S. adds HIV as a “dangerous contagious disease” to its immigration exclusion list; mandates testing of all applicants.</p> <p>Congress adopts Helms Amendment banning use of federal funds for AIDS education materials that “promote or encourage, directly or indirectly, homosexual activities,” often referred to as the “no promo homo” policy.</p> <p>CDC launches first AIDS-related public service announcements, <i>America Responds to AIDS</i>.</p> <p><i>And the Band Played On: Politics, People and the AIDS Epidemic</i>, a history of the early years of the epidemic by Randy Shilts, is published.</p> <p>Entertainer Liberace dies of AIDS.</p> <p>First issue of <i>AIDS Treatment News</i> published to provide HIV treatment information to community members.</p>				<p>CDC releases guidelines for the prevention of Pneumocystis carinii pneumonia (PCP), an AIDS-related opportunistic infection and major cause of morbidity and mortality for people with HIV.</p> <p>Congress creates the National Commission on AIDS.</p> <p>Head of NIH's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), Dr. Anthony Fauci, endorses parallel track policy, giving those that do not qualify for clinical trials access to experimental treatments.</p> <p>Dancer and choreographer Alvin Ailey dies of AIDS.</p> <p>Photographer Robert Mapplethorpe dies of AIDS.</p> <p>First “Day Without Art” organized by Visual AIDS to acknowledge the impact of AIDS on the arts.</p>		<p>FDA approves use of AZT for pediatric AIDS.</p> <p>Congress enacts the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act of 1990, which provides federal funds for community-based care and treatment services. In first year, it is funded at \$220.5 million.</p> <p>Congress enacts the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities, including people living with HIV/AIDS.</p> <p>Ryan White dies of AIDS at the age of 18.</p> <p>Pop artist Keith Haring dies of AIDS.</p> <p>Kimberly Bergalis is believed to have been infected with HIV by her dentist, causing major public debate.</p>	
<p>President Reagan first mentions the word AIDS in public.</p> <p>Institute of Medicine report calls for a national education campaign and creation of National Commission on AIDS.</p> <p>Surgeon General Koop issues <i>Surgeon General's Report on AIDS</i>, calling for education and condom use; distributes HIV/AIDS brochure to every U.S. household.</p> <p>National Academy of Science issues report critical of the U.S. response to “national health crisis;” calls for a \$2 billion investment.</p> <p>Nine-year-old hemophiliac with HIV, Ricky Ray, is barred from Florida school and his family's home is burned by arsonists in the following year.</p>		<p>First panel of the AIDS Memorial Quilt created.</p> <p>Informal distribution of clean syringes begins in Boston and New Haven.</p>		<p>FDA allows the importation of unapproved drugs for persons with life-threatening illnesses, including HIV/AIDS.</p> <p>National Institutes of Health (NIH) establishes the Office of AIDS Research (OAR), restructures its AIDS research program, and establishes the AIDS Clinical Trials Group (ACTG).</p> <p>The Health Omnibus Programs Extension (HOPE) Act of 1988 authorizes the use of federal funds for AIDS prevention and education, and testing.</p> <p>World Health Organization (WHO) declares first World AIDS Day on December 1.</p> <p>ACT UP demonstrates at FDA headquarters in protest of slow pace of drug approval process.</p>		<p>AIDS activists stage several major protests about AIDS drugs during the year, including events at the Golden Gate Bridge, the New York Stock Exchange, and the U.S. headquarters of Burroughs Wellcome (the manufacturer of AZT).</p>		<p>In protest of U.S. immigration policy, domestic and international non-governmental groups boycott the 6th International AIDS Conference in San Francisco. (The 1992 conference, scheduled to take place in Boston, is moved to Amsterdam.)</p> <p>“Women, AIDS & Activism,” developed by ACT UP's Women's Caucus, is published, becoming the first book of its kind.</p> <p>First National Conference on Women and AIDS held in Boston.</p>	
29,003	24,806	49,743	41,262	82,764	62,451	117,781	90,218	161,073	121,952

1991 1992 1993 1994 1995



AIDS becomes the number one cause of death for men aged 25–44.



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CDC expands case definition of AIDS to reflect fuller spectrum of the disease, including adding a condition specific to women and those more prevalent among injection drug users.

FDA approves female condom for sale in U.S.

NIAID establishes the Women's Interagency HIV Study (WIHS), conducted in tandem with the CDC's HIV Epidemiology Study (HERS), both major research studies on women and HIV/AIDS.

Public Health Service recommends use of AZT by pregnant women to reduce perinatal transmission based on "076" study showing up to 70% reduction in transmission.

The FDA approves an oral HIV test, the first non-blood based antibody test for HIV.

AIDS becomes leading cause of death for all Americans ages 25 to 44; remains as such through 1995.

CDC releases first guidelines for the prevention of opportunistic infections in persons infected with HIV.

In record time, FDA approves first protease inhibitor, saquinavir, for use in combination with other HIV drugs, or highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART).

Congress enacts the Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) Act of 1991 to provide housing assistance to people living with AIDS through grants to states and local communities.

CDC recommends restrictions on the practice of HIV-positive health care workers and Congress enacts law requiring states to take similar action.

Congress enacts the NIH Revitalization Act, giving the OAR primary oversight of all NIH AIDS research; requires NIH and other research agencies to expand involvement of women and minorities in all research.

President Clinton establishes White House Office of National AIDS Policy (ONAP).

CDC initiates HIV prevention community planning process for local distribution of federal prevention funding.

President Clinton signs HIV immigration exclusion policy into law.

NIH issues guidelines requiring applicants for NIH grants to address "the appropriate inclusion of women and minorities in clinical research."

President Clinton establishes Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS.

Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) established to oversee ongoing efforts of six different UN programs working on AIDS.

First White House Conference on HIV/AIDS.

NBA legend Earvin "Magic" Johnson announces that he is HIV-positive and retires from basketball.

Freddie Mercury, lead singer of the rock band Queen, dies of AIDS.

Red ribbon introduced as the international symbol of AIDS awareness at the Tony Awards by Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS and Visual AIDS.

Ricky Ray dies of AIDS.

Tennis star Arthur Ashe announces he has AIDS.

World class ballet dancer Rudolf Nureyev dies of AIDS.

Katrina Haslip, leading advocate for women with AIDS in prison, dies of AIDS.

Tony Kushner's play about AIDS, *Angels in America*, wins the Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize.

Randy Shiits dies of AIDS at age 42.

Pedro Zamora, a young gay man living with HIV, appears on the cast of MTV's popular show, *The Real World*; dies later this year at age 22.

Elizabeth Glaser, co-founder of the Pediatric AIDS Foundation, dies of AIDS.

Olympic Gold Medal diver Greg Louganis discloses that he is living with HIV, leading to public debate regarding disclosure of one's HIV status.

Rap artist Eric Wright (Easy-Z of NWA) dies of AIDS.

Mary Fisher and Bob Hattoy, each HIV-positive, address the Republican and Democratic National Conventions, respectively.

Hundreds of community members from across the country converge in Washington, DC to lobby Congress for increased AIDS funding as part of first annual *AIDSWatch*.

The National Association of People with AIDS creates the first ever *National HIV Testing Day*.

1996		1997		1998		1999		2000	
				African American leaders declare a “state of emergency” in the African American community because of AIDS.					
<p>FDA approves first non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NNRTI), nevirapine.</p> <p>HIV no longer leading cause of death for all Americans ages 25–44; remains leading cause of death for African Americans in this age group.</p> <p>FDA approves the viral load test, a new test which measures the level of HIV in the body.</p> <p>FDA approves an HIV urine test and also the first HIV home testing and collection kit.</p> <p>The number of new AIDS cases diagnosed declines for first time in history of epidemic, though experience varies by gender, race and ethnicity.</p> <p>The Levine Committee, a blue ribbon advisory panel, calls for overhaul of NIH AIDS research, including stronger role for OAR and increased support for vaccine-related and investigator initiated research.</p> <p>Congress reauthorizes the Ryan White CARE Act. Over 50 cities now eligible for funding. Overall, CARE Act funded at \$738.5 million.</p> <p>Former heavyweight boxing champion Tommy Morrison announces he is HIV-positive.</p> <p><i>Time Magazine</i> names AIDS researcher Dr. David Ho as its “Man of the Year.”</p>		<p>AIDS-related deaths in the U.S. decline by more than 40% compared to the prior year, largely due to the advent of combination therapy.</p> <p>President Clinton announces goal of finding an effective vaccine in 10 years and the creation of Dale and Betty Bumpers Vaccine Research Center.</p> <p>Congress enacts the FDA Modernization Act of 1997, codifying accelerated approval process, and allowing dissemination of information about off-label uses of drugs.</p>		<p>DHHS issues first national guidelines for the use of antiretroviral therapy in adults.</p> <p>First large scale human trials (Phase III) for an HIV vaccine begin.</p> <p>Despite earlier optimism, several reports indicate growing signs of treatment failure and side effects from HAART.</p> <p>DHHS Secretary Shalala determines that needle exchange programs are effective and do not encourage the use of illegal drugs, but Clinton administration does not lift the ban on use of federal funds for such purposes.</p> <p>Congress enacts the Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Fund Act of 1998, authorizing payments to hemophiliacs infected through unscreened blood-clotting agents between 1982 and 1987.</p> <p>Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) calls on DHHS Secretary Shalala to declare public health emergency; Congress approves \$156 million for the Minority HIV/AIDS Initiative, coinciding with Surgeon General Satcher’s efforts to address racial and ethnic health disparities.</p> <p>The U.S. Supreme Court in <i>Bragdon v. Abbot</i> rules that the Americans with Disabilities Act covers those in earlier stages of HIV disease, not just AIDS.</p>		<p>U.S. announces new funding for global pandemic through the Leadership and Investment in Fighting an Epidemic (LIFE) Initiative.</p> <p>Congressional Hispanic Caucus, with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, convenes Congressional hearing on impact of HIV/AIDS on Latino community.</p>		<p>CDC reports that, among men who have sex with men, African American and Latino cases exceed those among whites.</p> <p>President Clinton announces Millennium Vaccine Initiative, creating incentives for development and distribution of vaccines against HIV, TB and malaria.</p> <p>U.S. and UN Security Councils declare HIV/AIDS a security threat.</p> <p>President Clinton issues Executive Order to assist developing countries in importing or producing generic forms of HIV treatments.</p> <p>UNAIDS, WHO and other global health groups announce joint initiative with five major pharmaceutical manufacturers to negotiate reduced prices for AIDS drugs in developing countries.</p> <p>Congress reauthorizes CARE Act for the second time and approves \$1.8 billion in funding for the program.</p> <p>Congress enacts the Global AIDS and Tuberculosis Relief Act of 2000, authorizing up to \$600 million for U.S. global efforts.</p> <p>President Clinton creates first ever Presidential Envoy for AIDS Cooperation.</p> <p>DHHS approves first state Medicaid expansion waiver for people with HIV in Maine; Massachusetts and District of Columbia also approved later this year and Massachusetts becomes first state to enroll new clients in April 2001.</p>	
<p>11th International AIDS Conference in Vancouver, British Columbia highlights effectiveness of protease inhibitors, creating period of optimism.</p> <p>Non-governmental International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) formed to eliminate barriers to development of an effective HIV vaccine.</p>				<p>African American leaders declare a “state of emergency” in the African American community because of AIDS.</p> <p>Global AIDS and human rights activists Jonathan Mann and Mary Lou Clements-Mann are killed in a plane crash en route to the WHO in Geneva.</p>		<p>Reggie Williams, founder of the National Task Force on AIDS Prevention, dies of AIDS.</p>		<p>Under the slogan, “Break the Silence,” the 13th International AIDS Conference in Durban, South Africa is the first International AIDS Conference held in a developing nation, and serves to heighten awareness of the global pandemic.</p>	
581,429	382,261	641,086	403,206	688,200	419,638	733,374	430,246	753,907	438,795



Major Sources

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