

STATUS OF THE EPIDEMIC

GET INFORMED



30

years of achievements
 years of challenges

December 1, WORLD AIDS DAY

Free information from anywhere in Spain:

Spanish Red Cross > 900 111 000
 informacionvih@cruzroja.es
www.cruzroja.es/vih/
 900 ROSA > 900 601 601

Information by autonomous regions and cities:

- Andalusia > 900 850 100 / www.juntadeandalucia.es/salud/vih
- Aragon > 900 111 000 / www.saludpublicaaragon.es
- Asturias > 985 338 832 / www.pruebadeamor.org
- Balearic Islands > 971177360 / <http://vihsida.caib.es>
- Canary Islands > 902 114 444/922 237590 / www.gobiernodecanarias.org/sanidad/scs/sida.htm
- Cantabria > 942 207 745/732 / www.saludcantabria.org
- Castile-La Mancha > 900 111 000 / www.jccm.es
- Castile-León > 983 413 600/ www.saludcastillayleon.es
- Catalonia > 900 212 222 / <http://canalsalut.gencat.cat>
- Extremadura > 924 382 641/924 382 594 / www.saludextremadura.com
- Galicia > 881 542 914 / <http://dxsp.sergas.es>
- Madrid > 900 111 000 / www.madrid.org
- Murcia > 900 706 706 / www.murciasalud.es
- Navarre > 848 423 396 / www.isp.navarra.es
- Basque Country > 943 006 464 / www.osakidetza.euskadi.net/sida
- La Rioja > 941 291 976 / www.riojasalud.es
- Valencian Community > 900 702 020 / www.sp.san.gva.es
- Ceuta > 856 205 009 / 900 101 867 / www.plansidaceuta.es
- Melilla > 952 976 251 / www.melilla.es

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE EPIDEMIC IN SPAIN...	TODAY IN SPAIN...
HIV was mainly transmitted through the shared use of materials used for injections.	HIV is mainly transmitted through sexual relations without protection.
The highest rates of AIDS in Europe were reported.	The figures on new diagnoses of HIV infection are similar to those in the European Union.
The life expectancy of people with HIV was short: no more than 10 years after becoming infected.	HIV has become a chronic disease, though with no treatment leading to a cure.
The main clinical concern was the appearance of opportunistic infections and diseases.	The ageing of people with HIV and the side-effects of treatments are the main focus of research and treatment.



It has been 30 years since the first cases of AIDS were diagnosed. Throughout this time, great advancements have been made in terms of knowledge about the infection and its treatment. However, many significant challenges remain involving AIDS prevention, as well as the way in which society and the health care system deal with this disease.

Achievements

WE KNOW WHAT HIV IS, HOW IT IS TRANSMITTED AND HOW TO PREVENT IT

The **human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)** destroys our body's defense systems and causes people to suffer from infections, tumors and other diseases. **AIDS** is the most serious stage of infection by HIV.

HIV CAN ONLY BE TRANSMITTED BY:

- Having sexual relations with penetration (whether vaginal, anal or oral) without protection. The risk of infection by HIV exists for both the person who performs penetration and the person who is penetrated, though the risk is higher for the latter, and it increases when a person has lesions on the genitals or other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).
- Sharing a sharp object that has been in contact with infected blood: syringes, needles, instruments for acupuncture, tattoos, piercings, etc.
- A woman with HIV to her child during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding.

HIV CAN BE PREVENTED:

- By using a condom (male or female) during sexual relations with penetration and avoiding ejaculation in the mouth if oral sex is practiced.
- By using sterile materials and avoiding the shared use of syringes, needles and other means of injection, in the case of injected drug use.
- If you are pregnant and you have HIV, there are treatments which effectively reduce the risk of transmission. Breastfeeding is not recommended.

WE KNOW HOW TO DETECT HIV

An HIV test is a specific analysis which detects HIV infection. It must always be **voluntary and confidential**, and it may also be taken **anonymously**.

It can be taken for **free** at **primary care health centers in the public system**. At **clinics for sexually transmitted disease**, and at certain **NGOs** and **pharmacies**, you will not be asked for your health care card.

There are also **rapid tests** for detecting HIV, **the results of which can be obtained in less than 30 minutes**. A positive result must be confirmed afterwards.

ANTIRETROVIRAL TREATMENTS ARE AVAILABLE

In Spain, antiretroviral treatments are available which improve quality of life, increase the rate of survival of people with HIV and effectively reduce the risk of transmitting the virus from mother to child.

Challenges

INTENSIFYING PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Despite the advancements achieved, the number of people living with HIV continues to rise.

Therefore, strategies for **PROMOTING THE USE OF CONDOMS** must be intensified as a basic measure for preventing HIV transmission.

ELIMINATING LATE DIAGNOSES

In Spain, it is estimated that there are from **120,000 to 150,000 people infected with HIV**, of which approximately **35,000** do not yet know it. Therefore, early testing is a priority.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE GET TESTED:

- Women who are pregnant or planning a pregnancy.
- People who have suffered from some STD, tuberculosis or viral hepatitis.
- People who have a stable partner and wish to stop using condoms with their partners.
- All people who have had sexual relations with penetration (anal or vaginal, as well as oral if there was ejaculation), without a condom with a person who has HIV, or if you do not know whether the person was infected.
- Those who have shared materials for injecting drugs (syringes, needles, spoons, filters, etc.).

If you have taken part in any practice with risk, do not wait. Go to your health care center or other location where you can have the test taken. They will assess your case there, inform you about the test and, if your test results come out negative, they will tell you whether you should take it again, and when.

Knowing whether you are infected as early as possible will allow you to access an effective treatment which improves your quality of life and increases your survival and adopt the measures necessary to avoid transmitting the infection to other people.

DEVELOPING A VACCINE AND A CURE

As of today, there are several clinical trials under way to test vaccines and methods for reducing or eliminating HIV from the body.

PROMOTING UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO TREATMENTS IN IMPOVERISHED COUNTRIES

One essential aspect is for everyone with HIV, regardless of whether their country is rich or poor, to have access to the treatments.

ADAPTING CARE FOR PEOPLE WITH HIV TO THEIR NEW NEEDS

The needs of people with HIV are different from those which existed in the early years of the epidemic. They now undergo deterioration due to infection, as well as suffering from the side-effects of the antiretroviral treatments and, in many cases, other chronic infections such as hepatitis, as well as other diseases and conditions which typically come with age.

Because the disease has become chronic and due to the ageing of people with HIV, these topics must be dealt with in an integrated, multidisciplinary manner, including medical, psychological and social factors.

FIGHTING AGAINST PREJUDICE, SOCIAL STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION OF PEOPLE WITH HIV

Discrimination remains an important problem to be faced by people with HIV. This stigma is caused by prejudices about sexuality, infectious diseases and their association with formerly stigmatized groups, as well as by a lack of knowledge and mistaken ideas about HIV, AIDS, the ways it is transmitted and the ways it is not transmitted.

HIV IS NOT TRANSMITTED BY:

- Kisses, caresses, shaking hands or touching.
- Tears, sweat, saliva, coughing or sneezes.
- Sharing commonly used objects (telephones, silverware, etc.), clothing, food, showers, bathrooms, toilets, swimming pools, athletic or entertainment facilities, working spaces, homes, schools, spas or public establishments.
- Through animals, mosquitoes or other insects.
- By donating or receiving blood, in countries where controls are appropriate.