

HIV/AIDS is one of the world's most devastating diseases. To help fight it, biopharmaceutical researchers are testing 77 medicines for HIV/AIDS and related conditions and intensifying their work toward the development of vaccines. The medicines now in the pipeline will add to the 88 already approved since the AIDS virus was first identified more than 20 years ago.

Vaccine research is crucial to the fight against AIDS. "A safe and effective HIV vaccine is critical to the control of HIV globally," says Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. Currently, 19 vaccines are in development.

According to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, over the last quarter century, nearly 65 million people were infected with HIV, and an estimated 25 million have died of AIDS-related illnesses. As many as 1.2 million U.S. residents are estimated to be living with HIV infection. Today it is estimated that close to 40 million people worldwide live with HIV—yet the vast majority are unaware of their status. The increased use of newer prescription medicines has helped in recent years to substantially reduce the U.S. AIDS death rate. However, without a dramatic breakthrough about 45 million new people could be infected with the HIV virus by 2010.

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