

Latinos and the HIV Epidemic

The Epidemic

435 AIDS cases have been diagnosed among Latinos, comprising 14% of the U.S. total

First AIDS case diagnosed in Mexico

First cases of immune deficiency reported in U.S. and Puerto Rico

Name "AIDS" given to new disease

CDC reports 23 cases of AIDS-related pneumonia among Latinos

Dr. Robert Gallo (U.S. National Cancer Institute) and Dr. Luc Montagnier (Institut Pasteur, Paris) co-discover HIV, the AIDS virus

HIV tests become available

First AIDS case reported in Cuba

Women represent 7% of U.S. AIDS cases; more than 20% of these women are Latina

First HIV treatment, AZT, approved by FDA at a dose of 2 pills every 4 hours (12 tablets per day)

Deaths from AIDS are twice as high for Latinos as for whites

Injection drug users comprise over half of U.S. AIDS cases among Latinos

Advent of Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy (HAART) with introduction of first protease inhibitor; dosing is 2–3 times daily, totaling more than 20 tablets

AIDS rate among Latinas is seven times higher than among white women

Simpler treatment regimens are introduced involving 2 pills a day

Latinos account for 20% of AIDS cases but comprise 14% of the U.S. population

Latino teens account for 21% of new AIDS cases among teens but only 16% of U.S. teenagers

FDA approves rapid HIV test, which gives results in 20 minutes

CDC issues guidelines for use of HIV drugs to prevent HIV transmission following sexual or drug-using exposure

CDC reports over 1 million Americans are living with HIV/AIDS, 17% of whom are Latino

June 5 marks 25th anniversary of start of AIDS epidemic

Treatment advances make combination therapy more convenient for many patients

CDC recommends that HIV tests be a routine part of medical care for all people 13–64 years of age

1981 1982 1983 1984 1985 1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007

U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Margaret Heckler says an AIDS vaccine will be available within 2 years; in 2006, an AIDS vaccine remains more than a decade away

Cuba begins quarantining people living with HIV in sanatoria

Hispanic AIDS Awareness Program (HAAP) founded in Florida

Surgeon General C. Everett Koop distributes 4 million Spanish-language AIDS education pamphlets

National Minority AIDS Council is founded

U.S. enacts policy that denies HIV-positive immigrants and visitors entry into the country

Puerto Rican boxer Esteban De Jesús dies of AIDS

AIDS organization Bienestar is founded in southern California

Miami-Dade County Health Department launches Minority AIDS Prevention Initiative

Latino Commission on AIDS is founded

Antonia Novello, MD, becomes first Latino and first woman Surgeon General; she works to raise AIDS awareness among Latinos

HIV-positive Cuban novelist Reinaldo Arenas dies in New York City

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Puerto Rican-American film director Joseph P. Vazquez dies of AIDS

HIV-positive actor Pedro Zamora is featured on MTV's "Real World"; he dies later that year

Cuba's quarantine of HIV-positive people is lifted

Cuban poet Roberto Valero dies in Washington, D.C.

New York City Human Rights Commissioner Dennis De Leon discloses he is HIV positive in a *New York Times* opinion piece

Puerto Rican salsa singer and composer Hector Lavoe dies of AIDS

Dominican-born actress and activist Ilka Tanya Payan announces she is HIV positive

Daniel C. Montoya named Executive Director of the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS

TV talk show star Cristina Saralegui launches the AIDS awareness organization Arriba La Vida

Congress establishes the Minority HIV/AIDS Initiative with \$156 million in funding

Puerto Rican salsa singer and composer Frankie Ruiz dies of AIDS

Ice-skating champion Rudy Galindo is diagnosed with HIV

Vice Admiral Richard Carmona, MD, appointed Surgeon General

First annual National Latino AIDS Awareness Day takes place on October 15

Miami-Dade County Health Department launches "25 Myths/25 Realities" national AIDS awareness campaign

Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC) launches Immigration Project to help people living with HIV from Latin America

Hispanic AIDS Forum founded in New York City

News and Events