

25 Years of AIDS: some facts and figures

- 1959: the first specimen of the HIV virus was found in a blood sample (although it wasn't known as HIV at this time).
- 1981: the first cases of unusual immune system failure appeared.
- 1982: this illness was named AIDS (^{Acquired} ~~Assisted~~ Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome).
- 1983: a heterosexual AIDS epidemic started in Central Africa.
- 1984: the HIV (Human Immuno-deficiency Virus) was identified as the cause of AIDS.
- 1985: the first blood tests for HIV were done.
- 1990: by this date, over 1 million children had lost one or both parents to AIDS.
- 1995: an epidemic of HIV infection started among injecting drug users in Eastern Europe.
- 1999: trials of the new HIV vaccine began.
- 1995-2005: during these 10 years, the average life expectancy in sub-Saharan Africa fell from 62 years of age to just 43 years.
- 2004: in this year alone, 3 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa became HIV+.
- 2005: the number of children whose parent(s) has died from AIDS has risen to 15 million.
- In the 25 years of the Aids epidemic, over 20 million people have died.
- And nearly 40 million people in the world are HIV positive at the moment.
- The areas of the world most hit by the epidemic are: Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe.
- In Europe, the highest rates of HIV infections are among 18-25 year-old heterosexuals.