25 Years Ago on November 7: Magic Johnson's HIV Announcement [VIDEO]

What does Johnson say about life since then? And how would today's media handle his disclosure?

November 7, 2016

On November 7, 1991, basketball superstar Earvin "Magic" Johnson held a press conference to announce that he was HIV positive and would be retiring from the Los Angeles Lakers. One could easily argue that the disclosure made him the most famous person living with the virus and that it remains one of the most pivotal and memorable moments in the history of the epidemic.

Below, watch original CNN footage of Johnson's press conference.

On the 25th anniversary of his disclosure, Johnson took to his website, The Playbook, to post an article titled "Life Is Going to Go on for Me."

"November 7, 1991 was a life changing day that I never saw coming," he writes. "Up until then, I thought the hardest thing I'd ever done was play against Michael Jordan or Larry Bird, but on this day I began the fight of my life. This day, I began to realize how God was working in my life. My faith gave me strength to stand up and tell the world that I had contracted Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)."

Also on the 25th anniversary, an article in the Los Angeles Daily News poses the question, "How would Magic Johnson's HIV announcement have been handled today?"

"If Magic gave the same announcement today under the same conditions as was before—while still playing as an elite in the league—you know there would be massive trending on Twitter, much of it likely to be sadly unsavory and unfair," Daniel Durbin, PhD, the director of the University of Southern California Annenberg Institute of Sports, Media, and Society, told the newspaper.

"I don't see any way this isn't a story that TMZ breaks—they break everything," added Will Leitch, the founder of sports news site Deadspin.com. "There would have been a nurse's aide or an orderly somewhere who would have spilled. Absolutely no question."

To coincide with the 25th anniversary, Cookie Johnson, his wife, has published a new memoir, titled Believing in Magic. For more details, read "How Magic Johnson Told His Wife—and Ex-

Lovers—He Had HIV.”

Magic Johnson’s HIV announcement via CNN, part one:

Magic Johnson’s HIV announcement, CNN, part two:

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/magic-johson-hiv-announcement-25-years-ago