Wistar Institute Unveils Center for HIV Cure Research

The HIV Cure and Viral Disease Center brings together top scientists to advance HIV cure research and study other viral diseases.

June 19, 2025 By Laura Schmidt

The Wistar Institute unveiled a new center dedicated to finding a cure for HIV and other viral diseases, according to Philly Voice.

Philadelphia-based Wistar is a top independent nonprofit specializing in researching HIV and other infectious diseases, cancer and immunology. Wistar's new $24 million center, the HIV Cure and Viral Diseases Center, aims to advance HIV cure research and boasts more than 25,000 square feet, including laboratories. This expansion marks the first in Wistar's more than 130-year history and comes at a critical time for biomedical research, as the Trump administration continues to slash funding in several areas of research.

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Led by executive vice president Luis Montaner, DVM, DPhil, the center brings together top scientists, community leaders and public health champions to address some of the world's most pressing health challenges.

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"I am confident we will advance toward an HIV cure in my lifetime," Montaner told Philly Voice. "With the launch of this center, Wistar makes a clear and bold statement that the time to get us to an HIV cure is now."

Worldwide, more than 39 million people are living with HIV, including more than 18,000 in Philadelphia.

Medical advances have made HIV highly treatable with antiretroviral medications, which have enabled many people living with HIV to achieve and maintain an undetectable viral load, which

means they cannot transmit HIV to others (known as Undetectable Equals Untransmittable, or U=U). What's more, safe and effective options for HIV prevention include pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).

Despite these lifesaving advancements in HIV research, scientists worldwide continue to search for a lasting cure that doesn't require daily medication.

With support from world-renowned scientists, research experts and community leadership, the new center aims not only to find a cure for HIV but also to yield insights into the treatment of other viral infections.

"I'm very hopeful that this center is but the beginning of what is going to be a transformative scientific advancement that will not only benefit people living with HIV but may benefit world health in general," Montaner told WHYY News.

To read more, click #Cure or read "Sharing the Hope," POZ's profile on Paul Edmonds, one of a few people to be cured of HIV after a stem cell transplant.

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