

World AIDS Day 2020

How many people have HIV in the United States? In the world? Here's a primer on basic statistics.

December 1, 2020 By [Trent Straube](#)

Tuesday, December 1, is World AIDS Day. First observed in 1988, the awareness day marks a time to honor those lost to HIV, to support those fighting the epidemic and to raise awareness about the virus and its related stigma. This year's theme is "Ending the HIV/AIDS Epidemic: Resilience and Impact."

"The 2020 theme focuses on the global commitment to deliver quality, people-centered HIV prevention and treatment services for impact," writes the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which has prepared a [tool kit for promoting World AIDS Day](#). "The theme also speaks to strengthening the capacity and resilience of communities and health systems to address HIV prevention services in the midst of a global pandemic. While COVID-19 has created major new challenges, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and its partners remain committed to accelerating efforts to [End the HIV Epidemic](#)."



[View this post on Instagram](#)

A post shared by HIV.gov (@hivgov)

To learn more about the intersection of COVID-19 and HIV, see “[What People With HIV Need to Know About the New Coronavirus](#),” “[#WorldAIDSDay and the Lessons of #HIV Unlearned](#)” and a collection of [other articles here](#).

Indeed, as a result of the social distancing required amid the COVID-19 pandemic, most World AIDS Day events will be held virtually this year. On the upside, that means you can “attend” numerous events—even those taking place across the globe—from the comfort and safety of your home.

Join us for OUT AND PROUD: A World AIDS Day ACT UP Drag Show feat. a cast of HIV+ drag performers on 12/1 at 8 PM EDT hosted by [@FloridaManly](#) and our very own

[@harsh_babe](#). It will be steaming live on

<https://t.co/90e125WPqg>. [#WAD2020](#)

pic.twitter.com/snjWoQzkZQ

— ACT UP NY (@actupny) [November 25, 2020](#)

For a few suggestions, see “[Totally Free, Socially Distanced World AIDS Day Events!](#)” And search the hashtag #WorldAIDSDay on social media for numerous other happenings, like the ACT UP event above.

Coincidentally, this year’s World AIDS Day takes place on [Giving Tuesday](#), which was launched in 2012 to mark a specific time (the Tuesday after Thanksgiving) to donate money, time and other gifts to causes you care about. Why not give to an HIV group important to you?

The San Francisco AIDS Foundation & the Solano AIDS Coalition! <https://t.co/cKjRZikj7s>

— Bohemian Dorksody (@bohemiandork) [November 30,](#) [2020](#)

To learn more about HIV, you can visit the CDC's page about [Basic Statistics on HIV](#). It includes data such as:

- An estimated 1.2 million people in the United States had HIV at the end of 2018, the most recent year for which this information is available. Of those people, about 14%, or one in seven, did not know they had HIV.
- In 2018, 37,968 people received an HIV diagnosis in the United States and dependent areas. The annual number of new diagnoses decreased 7% from 2014 to 2018.
- In 2018, gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men accounted for 69% of all new HIV diagnoses in the United States and six dependent areas. In the same year, heterosexuals made up 24% of all HIV diagnoses.
- If we look at HIV diagnoses by race and ethnicity, we see that Blacks/African Americans are most affected by HIV. In 2018, adult and adolescent Blacks/African Americans accounted for 42% of all new HIV diagnoses. Additionally, Hispanics/Latinos are also strongly affected. They accounted for 27% of all new HIV diagnoses.
- HIV is largely an urban disease, with most cases occurring in metropolitan areas with 500,000 or more people. The South has the highest number of people living with HIV, but if population size is taken into account, the Northeast has the highest rate of people living with HIV. (Rates are the number of cases of disease per 100,000 people. Rates allow number comparisons between groups of different sizes.)
- Worldwide, there were about 1.7 million new cases of HIV in 2018. About 37.9 million people

were living with HIV around the world in 2018, and 24.5 million of them were receiving medicines to treat HIV, called antiretroviral therapy (ART). An estimated 770,000 people have died from AIDS-related illnesses since the start of the epidemic. Sub-Saharan Africa is the region most affected by HIV and AIDS worldwide and accounts for about 61% of all new HIV infections. Other regions significantly affected by HIV and AIDS include Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia.

Today is [#WorldAidsDay](#). We support those living with HIV and remember those we have lost over the years. Our partners [@TheDohertyInst](#) work tirelessly on HIV research, in the goal of finding a cure. Follow them today as they bring you touching stories just like the below. <https://t.co/BoRLikebiV>
— The Royal Melbourne Hospital (@TheRMH) [November 30, 2020](#)

To learn more about HIV, including information about transmission, prevention and treatment, visit the [POZ Basics](#) pages.