



## THE AIDS INSTITUTE

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**For Immediate Release: 5.16.08**

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### THE AIDS INSTITUTE SUPPORTS RECOGNITION OF HIV VACCINE AWARENESS DAY

**Washington, DC** - May 18, 2007, marks the 10th annual HIV Vaccine Awareness Day. According to a joint statement from Margaret I. Johnston, Ph.D., Gary J. Nabel, M.D., Ph.D., and Anthony S. Fauci, M.D. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health, this day is an opportunity to reflect upon the more than two decades of progress worldwide in the search for a safe and effective HIV vaccine. Today, many challenges remain, but we look forward with optimism as the HIV vaccine candidates in clinical trials today are among the most promising we have seen.

These clinical trials, as well as efforts to design the next generation of candidate vaccines, are essential to developing a safe and effective vaccine to help eradicate the modern-day plague of HIV/AIDS. The urgency of finding a safe and effective HIV vaccine is underscored by sobering statistics: Forty million people are currently living with HIV infection. Every day, another 11,000 individuals become infected with HIV, most of whom live in resource-poor countries. Last year alone, it is estimated that more than 40,000 individuals in the United States were infected with HIV. In this country, available data indicate that approximately two-thirds of new HIV diagnoses occur among African Americans and Hispanics, and more than one-quarter of new HIV diagnoses are in women.

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) of the National Institutes of Health initiated the first HIV vaccine trial in Bethesda, Maryland, in 1987. Since then, the Institute has worked with its partners to conduct a variety of vaccine clinical trials that have enrolled more than 26,000 volunteers. In the coming years, several major trials testing different vaccine candidates and approaches will be completed. Results of two ongoing efficacy trials—a large-scale 16,000-person trial in Thailand and a smaller 3,000-person trial in North America, South America, the Caribbean and Australia—are expected in the next two years. Results of another 3,000-person trial in South Africa will follow. Later this year, we hope to launch an 8,500-person trial in the United States, Latin America, the Caribbean and Sub-Saharan Africa. Although none of these trials is expected to lead immediately to a licensed vaccine, each study adds to the body of knowledge that helps shape future vaccine efforts.

Developing an effective vaccine depends upon collaboration among academic, private sector and government researchers, non-governmental organizations, and thousands of volunteers who are committed to the fight against AIDS. NIAID works closely with such organizations as the NIAID HIV Vaccine Trials Network (HVTN), the U.S. Military HIV Research Program, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative, the AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and others within and outside the United States.

Mitchell Warren, Executive Director of AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition, cites the “particularly important role” communities and researchers in developing countries play in vaccine development. “As more and larger trials are planned, we must continue to develop research, policy and advocacy infrastructure to support them, and ensure that vaccine development efforts are integrated with treatment and existing prevention programs,” he said.

“It has been more than 25 years since the first AIDS cases were reported and we still do not have a cure or a preventative vaccine,” said Dr. Gene Copello, Executive Director of the AIDS Institute. “During the past 25 years, more than 25 million people have died of AIDS and 14,000 new infections occur each day throughout the world, creating an urgent and compelling need for an effective vaccine.”

The AIDS Institute urges local communities to get involved in HIV vaccine research. To get more information and to help with the education and communications efforts please visit.

<http://www3.niaid.nih.gov/news/events/HVAD/>

<http://www.bethegeneration.org>

[www.iavi.org](http://www.iavi.org)

[www.theaidsinstitute.org](http://www.theaidsinstitute.org)

[www.avac.org](http://www.avac.org)

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*For more information and to become involved in AIDS advocacy work, please contact  
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*The AIDS Institute is a national nonprofit agency that promotes action for social change  
through public policy research, advocacy and education.*