

25 years of AIDS

In June 1981, scientists in the U.S. reported the first cases of unusual immune system failures among gay men and intravenous drug users.

Twenty-five years later, *Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome*, or *AIDS*, has spread to every corner of the world, claiming 25 million lives and infecting another 40 million people – half of them women

■ **1981:** First cases of AIDS identified in U.S. after young gay men in New York and California exhibit rare pneumonia and aggressive form of *Kaposi's sarcoma*

■ **1982:** U.S. *Centers for Disease Control* reports first cases of possible mother to child transmission of AIDS as well as infection by blood transfusions. **Number of known deaths in U.S. passes 1,000**



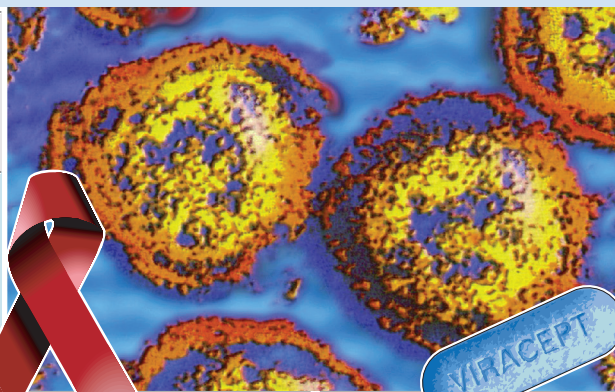
■ **1983:** *Dr Luc Montagnier* in France (left) – and later, *Dr Robert Gallo* (right) in U.S. – isolate retrovirus, later known as *Human Immunodeficiency Virus*, or *HIV*, as cause of AIDS. Heterosexual AIDS epidemic revealed in Central Africa

■ **1985:** American film star *Rock Hudson* becomes first international celebrity to disclose he has AIDS. **HIV antibody tests developed in U.S., Europe and Japan – screening of blood donations begins**



■ **1986:** Known deaths worldwide pass 16,300

■ **1987:** AIDS becomes first disease ever debated on floor of United Nations General Assembly. **First therapy for AIDS – AZT (azidothymidine) – approved for use in U.S.** Treatment costs \$6,300 per year. President *Ronald Reagan* calls AIDS “*public enemy number one*”



■ **1990:** One million children worldwide are estimated to have lost one or both parents to AIDS

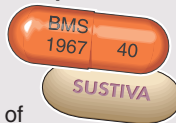
■ **1991:** Red ribbon becomes global symbol of AIDS awareness.



Rock singer *Freddie Mercury* dies just one day after he reveals to fans that he is HIV-positive.

10 million people are estimated HIV+ worldwide

■ **1992:** HIV prevalence in Uganda and Thailand begins to decrease following massive mobilization against epidemic. First *nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor* approved for use in U.S., first clinical trial of multiple drug cocktails held



■ **1993:** Ballet dancer *Rudolf Nureyev* dies of AIDS. Tennis star *Arthur Ashe* (left) dies after becoming infected with HIV as result of blood transfusion



■ **1994:** First treatment to reduce mother-to-child HIV transmission

■ **1995:** First *protease inhibitor* approved for use in U.S.

■ **1996:** United Nations' UNAIDS programme launched. Brazil becomes first developing country to provide free anti-retroviral therapy through its public health system. First *non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor*

■ **1997:** Some eight million children in Africa have lost one or both parents to AIDS. Worldwide death toll estimated at 6,400,000. CDC reports first case of probable HIV transmission through kissing

■ **1998:** Thirty-nine pharmaceutical companies file law suit to stop South Africa producing cheap generic drugs to treat country's 3.6 million HIV+ victims. Case generates global outrage

■ **1999:** First trial of possible HIV vaccine in a developing country starts in Thailand

■ **2000:** UNAIDS and WHO launch joint initiative with five pharmaceutical companies to increase access to HIV treatment in developing countries

■ **2001:** CDC reports that incidence of HIV in people older than 50 is increasing twice as fast as in younger populations

■ **2003:** U.S. President *George Bush* announces \$15 billion for AIDS relief. UNAIDS and WHO launch



3 by 5 initiative to increase number of people in low- and middle-income countries who have access to anti-retroviral therapy from 400,000 to three million people by 2005

■ **2004:** CDC estimates that 415,193 Americans are living with AIDS, of which four in 10 are African-Americans

■ **2005:** World leaders pledge to come as close as possible to universal treatment by 2010. **But by year's end, 3 by 5 initiative has reached total of only 1.3 million people**

■ **2006:** *Pope Benedict XVI* asks Vatican officials to study whether condoning use of condoms to stop spread of HIV-AIDS is consistent with church's pro-life stance.



Biggest impact would be in Africa – epicentre of AIDS pandemic – where more than 18 million children are expected to be orphaned by end of 2010 – an increase of 20% over next four years

