Today there are an estimated 850,000–950,000 HIV-positive individuals living in the United States—the largest number ever—according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Of these, 180,000–280,000 people do not know they are infected, and thus are suffering from a lack of treatment, while at the same time may be unknowingly spreading the virus. About 225,000 more who do know their status aren’t getting the care they need. These numbers will continue to grow unless everyone takes decisive action against the disease.

HIV/AIDS is taking a devastating and disproportionate toll on people of color in the United States. Community leaders and organizations can play a critical role in fighting the disease in their neighborhoods, and The Leadership Campaign on AIDS (TLCA) is dedicated to helping them do it.

TLCA: Fighting HIV/AIDS in Communities of Color!

Within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Office of HIV/AIDS Policy's The Leadership Campaign on AIDS (TLCA) is working externally and internally to support the fight against HIV/AIDS in communities of color. TLCA reaches out to community leaders and local and national organizations to improve education, awareness, and action against the disease. TLCA wants to help minority leaders fight the stigma, fear, and denial that exacerbate the problem, and to help build partnerships that will promote education, prevention, testing, vaccine awareness, and treatment. TLCA also reaches inwardly to help improve the coordination, information-sharing, communication efforts, and effectiveness of the Department’s HIV/AIDS initiatives and programs.

All adolescents and young adults (ages 13–24):
- Of the estimated 886,575 AIDS cases diagnosed in the United States since the beginning of the epidemic through 2002, 36,299 were among persons 13–24 years of age.
- Account for 1,909 new AIDS diagnoses in 2002, including 76 among adolescents 13–14 years old and 1,833 among young adults 15–24 years old.
- Account for an estimated 11 percent of HIV cases newly diagnosed in 2002.
- An estimated total of 5,108 adolescents 13–19 years of age have been diagnosed with AIDS through 2002.

Female adolescents and young adults:
- Represent an estimated 41 percent of HIV cases newly diagnosed in this age group in 2002.

African-American adolescents and young adults:
- Account for 46 percent of total AIDS cases diagnosed in people 13–24 years old through 2002.
- Account for 61 percent of AIDS cases newly diagnosed in 2002 among 13- to 24-year-olds.
- Represent an estimated 62 percent of all persons newly diagnosed with HIV for ages 20–24 in 2002.
- Males ages 13–24 account for 39 percent of total AIDS cases diagnosed through 2002 for that age group among males.
- Females ages 13–24 account for 60 percent of total AIDS cases diagnosed through 2002 for that age group among females.
- Females between 13 and 19 years of age represent an estimated 74 percent of all young women newly diagnosed with HIV in that age group in 2002.

Hispanic adolescents and young adults:
- Account for 22 percent of AIDS cases newly diagnosed in 2002 among 13- to 24-year-olds.
- Represent an estimated 11 percent of all persons ages 20–24 who were newly diagnosed with HIV in 2002.
- Account for 21 percent of total AIDS cases diagnosed in people 13–24 years old through 2002.

White adolescents and young adults:
- Represent an estimated 25 percent of all persons ages 20–24 who were newly diagnosed with HIV in 2002.
Did you know?

- An estimated 886,575 Americans have been diagnosed with AIDS from the beginning of the epidemic through 2002. Of the 42,136 estimated new diagnoses in 2002, 74 percent were male and 26 percent were female. Less than 1 percent were children under 13.2

- African Americans account for 39 percent of total estimated AIDS diagnoses through 2002, though they make up only 12.7 percent of the population.4 They also represent an estimated 54 percent of persons newly diagnosed with HIV in 2002.2

- Hispanics account for 18 percent of total estimated AIDS diagnoses through 2002, though they make up only 13.4 percent of the population.4

- The number of Asian/Pacific Islanders and American Indian/Alaska Natives living with AIDS continues to rise, with an approximately 10 percent increase each year over the past 5 years.2

- Women of color account for 80 percent of all women estimated to be living with AIDS. Women across racial/ethnic groups most commonly report heterosexual contact or injection drug use as their primary modes of exposure to HIV, while males most commonly report homosexual contact and injection drug use.2

* In the 30 areas with longstanding HIV reporting

The terms "African American" and "Black" are used interchangeably to include those individuals who self-identify as either. The term "Hispanic" includes those individuals who self-identify as "Latino/a" or "Hispanic."


Note: The models shown are for illustrative purposes only.

What Can You Do?

- Learn more about HIV/AIDS and its impact on your community.
- Protect yourself against HIV infection. Know the risks associated with sex and drug use.
- Get tested. It's important to know your HIV status to protect yourself and others.
- Get medical care and support if you're living with HIV. Effective treatments exist.
- Educate others about HIV/AIDS. Talk openly and honestly about prevention and treatment.
- Volunteer at a local HIV/AIDS organization.
- Post fact sheets about HIV/AIDS on bulletin boards and in local newsletters.
- Organize a community meeting. Invite educators, faith and business leaders, health care professionals, neighbors, and friends to talk about HIV/AIDS and its impact locally. Even if three people show up, change can happen!
- Help someone living with HIV/AIDS by being a friend.
- Help end the stigma associated with AIDS.
- Implement an activity to support HIV/AIDS observances such as World AIDS Day on December 1 or National HIV Testing Day on June 27. Visit www.omhrc.gov/hiv/aidsobservances for more ideas.

To Learn More

- Visit the CDC National Prevention Information Network at www.cdcnpin.org or call 1–800–458–5231.
- Call your doctor or other health care provider.
- Contact your local or state public health department.