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.¹

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.

Know the facts and Educate, Motivate, and Mobilize against HIV/AIDS!

- An estimated 886,575 AIDS cases have been diagnosed in the United States since the beginning of the epidemic through 2002. Of these cases:
  - 81 percent were among men
  - 18 percent were among women
  - 1 percent were among children less than 13 years of age.²
- Forty-one percent of the estimated total AIDS diagnoses are among Whites, 39 percent among Blacks, 18 percent among Hispanics, and less than 1 percent each were among Asian/Pacific Islanders and American Indian/Alaska Natives.²
- An estimated 312,133 cases of HIV have been diagnosed through 2002. An estimated 26,464 new HIV cases were diagnosed in 2002.²
- African Americans account for 54 percent of the estimated new HIV cases diagnosed in 2002.²
- The 10 states or territories reporting the highest number of total AIDS diagnoses among their residents are: New York, California, Florida, Texas, New Jersey, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Georgia, and Maryland.²
- Sixty-nine percent of the total estimated AIDS deaths have occurred in people ages 25–44.²
- Of the adult and adolescent Hispanics diagnosed with AIDS in the United States through 2002, roughly 81 percent were men.³
- Men of color represent 57 percent of AIDS cases newly diagnosed in 2002 among men who had sex with men.³ By comparison, in 1989 men of color represented only 31 percent of new AIDS cases in men who had sex with men.³
- Women account for 28 percent of the estimated HIV cases diagnosed in 2002.² Among these, Black and Hispanic women account for 81 percent of diagnoses. Among men in the same time period, Black and Hispanic men account for 61 percent of HIV diagnoses.³
- Persons ages 13–24 account for 11 percent of new HIV cases diagnosed in 2002.² Of these persons, females accounted for 41 percent of the cases.³
- Women across racial/ethnic groups most commonly report heterosexual contact or injection drug use as their primary modes of exposure to HIV.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 the National AIDS Hotline at 800–342–AIDS (Spanish 800–344–SIDA, TTY 800–243–7889).
• Visit the Office on Women's Health at www.4women.gov/owh/hiv.htm.
• Call your doctor or other health care provider.
• Contact your local or state public health department.