



New Report Shows 97 Medicines And Vaccines Currently In Development For HIV/AIDS

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America's pharmaceutical research and biotechnology companies are testing 97 medicines and vaccines to treat or prevent HIV/AIDS and related conditions, according to a new report released by the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA). December 1 marks the 21st anniversary of "World AIDS Day" a global awareness campaign that originated at the 1988 World Summit of Ministers of Health on Programmes for AIDS Prevention.

"We are greatly encouraged by these critically important medicines and vaccines in development to treat and prevent HIV infection," says PhRMA President and CEO Billy Tauzin. "Pharmaceutical researchers are continuing their efforts to develop new therapies and vaccines to improve and lengthen the lives of HIV-infected patients."

The report found that the 97 products in development include 23 vaccines and 54 antivirals. These drugs are either in human clinical trials or awaiting approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Thirty-one medicines to treat HIV/AIDS have been approved since scientists first identified the virus that causes AIDS more than 20 years ago. The first HIV/AIDS medicine was approved in 1987, just four years after the virus was identified.

Although the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate that more than 1 million Americans were living with HIV infection at the end of 2006, the increased availability and utilization of newer prescription medicines has helped to reduce the U.S. death rate from AIDS substantially in recent years, according to government statistics. In fact, the CDC estimates that since the introduction of highly active anti-retroviral therapy in 1995, the annual number of deaths in the U.S. due to AIDS has dropped by more than 70 percent.

Despite this progress, AIDS remains a devastating and growing health problem in developing countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, China, India and the Russian Federation. According to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, in 2007 an estimated 33 million people were living with HIV, 2.7 million were newly infected with HIV, and 2 million people died from the disease.

From 2000 to 2007, America's pharmaceutical research and biotechnology companies contributed more than \$9.2 billion to improve health care in the developing world, according to the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations.

The projects they supported included clinics to treat patients with HIV/AIDS, education and prevention programs, initiatives to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV, and donations of medicines for AIDS and related diseases. A number of companies also provide AIDS drugs at reduced prices in many countries.

"As a result of HIV/AIDS medicines, a disease that was once a virtual death sentence can now be controlled and treated as if it were a chronic disease," states Tauzin. "And the new medicines our scientists are working on right now bring hope for even more promising results in the future."

"While researchers are making exciting progress in the search for new treatments for HIV/AIDS, these efforts are wasted if the medicines that are developed don't get to the patients who need them," says PhRMA Senior Vice President Ken Johnson.

Help is available to patients in need through the Partnership for Prescription Assistance (PPA), a program sponsored by America's pharmaceutical research companies. To date, the PPA has helped more than 6 million patients nationwide. Since its launch in April 2005, the PPA bus tour has visited all 50 states and more than 3,000 cities.

Source: Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America

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