

World AIDS Day Fact Sheet

AIDS: A Killer Still at Large

- In 2015, 1.1 million people around the world died from AIDS and more than 36 million were estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).
- About two-thirds of those infected with HIV live in sub-Saharan Africa, the WHO estimates.
- Between 2010 and 2015, new HIV infections rose 57 percent in Eastern Europe and central Asia--the highest rate of increase anywhere, according to the joint United National program on AIDS (UNAIDS).
- Worldwide, women constitute more than half of all people living with HIV, and for those in their reproductive years, AIDS is the leading cause of death, reports the Foundation for AIDS Research (amfAR).
- AIDS is the No. 1 cause of death for adolescents in Africa and the No. 2 cause globally, according to UNICEF.
- HIV remains a significant health problem in the developed world. UNAIDS estimates that 2.4 million people are living with the disease in Western and Central Europe and in North America, and each year about 90,000 people living in these regions are newly infected with the virus.
- Less than half of all people worldwide who have HIV receive the life-saving treatment for the disease known as antiretroviral therapy, with the Mideast and Northern Africa having the lowest level of treatment--17 percent, according to UNAIDS. About 910,000 persons living with HIV and 87,000 children under 5 years of age began treatment of latent tuberculosis in 2015, but this is only 7 percent of the eligible children.

AIDS and Respiratory Disease

- Shortly after it emerged, HIV/AIDS fueled a global resurgence of tuberculosis that continues in many low- and middle-income countries. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, HIV infection is the strongest and most potent risk factor for progressing from latent to active TB. Co-morbidities, such as HIV infection and malnutrition, may lead to advanced disease before the affected persons seek medical attention.
- TB remains the leading cause of death among people living with HIV, accounting for about one in three AIDS-related deaths, reports UNAIDS. In 2015, tuberculosis killed 1.4 million people, making it the greatest single infectious agent cause of death and a leading cause of overall deaths in the world. When combined with HIV, it kills another 400,000 people.





- More than 75 percent of those co-infected with HIV and TB now receive antiretroviral therapy, according to UNAIDS.
- Those infected with HIV are also at greater risk of dying from *Pneumocystis jirovecii* pneumonia (PCP), the most common opportunistic infection of HIV, and from bacterial pneumonia (as much as twenty-fold) and Kaposi sarcoma.

The FIRS Response

The Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS) calls on governments, health care programs, clinicians, public health specialists, and non-government organizations to strengthen their responses to HIV/AIDS by:

- Increasing awareness of the continuing global threat of HIV-related disease and its connection to TB and other respiratory diseases.
- Improving HIV education of at-risk communities to reduce the incidence of new HIV infections and decrease health disparities.
- Reducing the incidence and severity of HIV-related disease by strengthening mother-to-child transmission prevention programs and increasing the early use of antiretroviral therapy.
- Ending HIV-associated TB through TB infection control, preventive therapy, widespread use of antiretroviral therapy, and greater access to additional treatments.
- Adequately funding research into improved treatments for both HIV and TB.
- Monitoring progress at the local and national level that further drive the eradication of disease.

About FIRS

[The Forum of International Respiratory Societies](#) (FIRS) is an organization comprising the world's leading international respiratory societies and working together to improve lung health globally. The members of FIRS are the [American Thoracic Society](#) (ATS), [American College of Chest Physicians](#) (CHEST), [Asociación Latinoamericana De Tórax](#) (ALAT), [Asian Pacific Society of Respirology](#) (APSR), [European Respiratory Society](#) (ERS), [International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases](#) (The Union) and [Pan African Thoracic Society](#) (PATS). Through education and advocacy, FIRS unites and enhances the efforts of 70,000 physicians, nurses, and other health care providers; biomedical researchers; and public health experts to improve lung health around the world.

