



# AIDS on the Net

Best bets for surfing the ultimate wave

January 1, 1999 By Shana Naomi Krochmal

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Face it: The HIV information superhighway is no walk in the park. When all you want is new data or a hot date, just typing in *AIDS* on a standard search engine like Yahoo! yields more than 3,000 website addresses. That's like looking for the proverbial needle in a haystack, and many sites in this unmonitored medium are open to misleading information or even hate groups exhorting PWAs to suicide for the greater good.

One low-tech way to navigate the Net is through specialized books such as the recent *HIV/AIDS Internet Information Sources and Resources* (Harrington Park Press). Edited by Jeffrey T. Huber, PhD, this overview of HIV-related websites is designed to help the average surfer pinpoint a relevant site. The book could also serve as inspiration for any lonely but ambitious HIVer who wants to set up his or her own webpage.

There's a drawback: Like all hard-copy Internet guides, this one ages poorly—many of the links we sampled had already expired. Those still up run the gamut from basic black-and-white to all sorts of bells and whistles. A few recommendations:

## **WEB SERVICES**

Some ASOs provide Internet access for their clients, and it's possible to obtain an e-mail address, even if you only have access through a public library or a friend's computer. Several companies like Juno ([www.juno.com](http://www.juno.com)), Yahoo! ([www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)) and Hotmail (now owned by Microsoft, [www.hotmail.com](http://www.hotmail.com)), offer web-based e-mail, which allows you to read, store and send e-mail through a browser like Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Explorer.

## **Critical Path AIDS Project ([www.critpath.com](http://www.critpath.com))**

This Philadelphia-based site comes to you from longtime activist (and POZ February/March 1996 cover boy) Kiyoshi Kuromiya and provides free Internet access to local individuals and organizations as well as free websites and mailing lists for individuals and organizations nationwide.

## **MAILING LISTS**

If you have an e-mail account, you can participate in electronic bulk mailings. All such lists e-mail you messages about AIDS policy, treatment or news. Most allow you to e-mail information

("posting") back to the list as well, whether it's related to treatment, an upcoming event or a response to a query. A moderated list requires messages to be approved by a facilitator. Be sure to read the the list leader's posting guidelines detailing the expected conduct of members so as to avoid offending others.

### **AEGIS ([www.aegis.com/todaysnews/list.asp](http://www.aegis.com/todaysnews/list.asp))**

The AIDS Education Global Information System (AEGIS) hosts a comprehensive website with links to information about AIDS published around the world. It also offers a service that sends between five and 15 news articles on AIDS to your e-mail address each day. This is a read-only list, which means that you can send but not receive messages to the list. This is not a discussion list.

### **AIDSACT ([www.actupny.org/treatment/AIDSACTlist.html](http://www.actupny.org/treatment/AIDSACTlist.html))**

For activists of all ages. This list, which is not officially sponsored by ACT UP, announces upcoming meetings, demos and related ornerly events; a new separate list does the same for treatment issues. Both are unmoderated.

### **GayPoz ([www.gaypoz.com](http://www.gaypoz.com))**

For gay men with HIV. This list is closed (you must send a note to the list owner to be approved), unmoderated and confidential. Postings can be anonymous. For more info, e-mail [gaypoz-approval@web-depot.com](mailto:gaypoz-approval@web-depot.com).

### **HIV Support**

For HIVers to share support and/or medical information. The list is unmoderated, confidential and accepts anonymous postings. E-mail [lists@web-depot.com](mailto:lists@web-depot.com) with a message containing the following text: info hiv-support.

### **Preventionews mailing list**

A daily read-only list by the CDC's National Center for HIV, STD and TB Prevention that includes a summary of journal articles and popular media. This is not a discussion list. To subscribe, send a blank e-mail message to: [preventionews-subscribe@cdcnpin.org](mailto:preventionews-subscribe@cdcnpin.org).

### **BULLETIN BOARDS AND FORUMS**

These are online communities that allow members to post their own messages and answer others. Requires the use of a browser like Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Explorer. Follow each group's posting practices or risk the boot.

### **CATIE ([www.catie.ca/treatment.nsf](http://www.catie.ca/treatment.nsf))**

Community AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE) is a Canadian organization that hosts a treatment forum for PWAs, caregivers and service providers. Much of site and postings are in both French and English.

## **The Body ([www.thebody.com/connect.html](http://www.thebody.com/connect.html))**

The Body hosts 16 bulletin boards in three areas: communities, relationships and information. Subjects range from “HIV/AIDS in the Military” to “I Just Tested Positive.” There are also groups for gay men, women, teens and Spanish-speakers. Hint: Organizing messages by “tree” (subject) rather than “date” makes for easier reading. POZ’s own lovely and luscious website ([www.poz.com](http://www.poz.com)), which contains the full text of all issues published since June 1995, is maintained by The Body.

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