An Antiretroviral Timeline

A look at where we are 40 years into the HIV epidemic.

May 17, 2021 By Liz Highleyman

1981: The first medical report of AIDS is published in Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.

1983: French researchers discover the retrovirus that causes AIDS.

1985: The first HIV antibody test is approved.

1987: The FDA approves the first antiretroviral drug, AZT (Retrovir).

1992: The FDA implements an accelerated approval process for experimental drugs.

1994: The ACTG 076 study shows that AZT prevents mother-to-child HIV transmission.

1995: The FDA approves the first protease inhibitor, Invirase (saquinavir).

1996: The first HIV viral load test is approved.

1996: The FDA approves the first NNRTI, Viramune (nelfinavir).

1997: The FDA approves Combivir (AZT plus lamivudine), the first coformulation of two HIV drugs.

1998: The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) issues its first antiretroviral treatment guidelines.

2001: The FDA approves tenofovir disoproxil fumarate (TDF), the first nucleotide reverse transcriptase inhibitor.

2002: The Global Fund is launched to provide HIV treatment to low-income countries.

2003: The United States launches the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPAR) to fight HIV in low-income countries.

2006:The FDA approves Atripla, the first single-tablet regimen.

2006: The SMART study shows that treatment interruptions lead to worse outcomes.

2007: The FDA approves the first integrase inhibitor, Isentress (raltegravir).

2010: The iPrEx study shows that Truvada (TDF/emtricitabine) reduces HIV risk for gay and bi men.

2011: The HPTN 052 trial shows that antiretroviral treatment reduces the risk of HIV transmission.

2012: DHHS guidelines recommend HIV treatment for all.

2012: The FDA approves Truvada for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP).

2015: The START trial shows the benefits of early HIV treatment.

2015: The World Health Organization recommends universal treatment for people living with HIV.

2018: The FDA approves Trogarzo (ibalizumab) for people with multidrug-resistant HIV.

2020: The FDA approves the first HIV attachment inhibitor, Rukobia (fostemsavir).

2021: The FDA approves Cabenuva (cabotegravir/rilpivirine), the first long-acting injectable regimen.

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