



Billy Porter Leaves Broadway's "Cabaret" Due to HIV-Related Illness

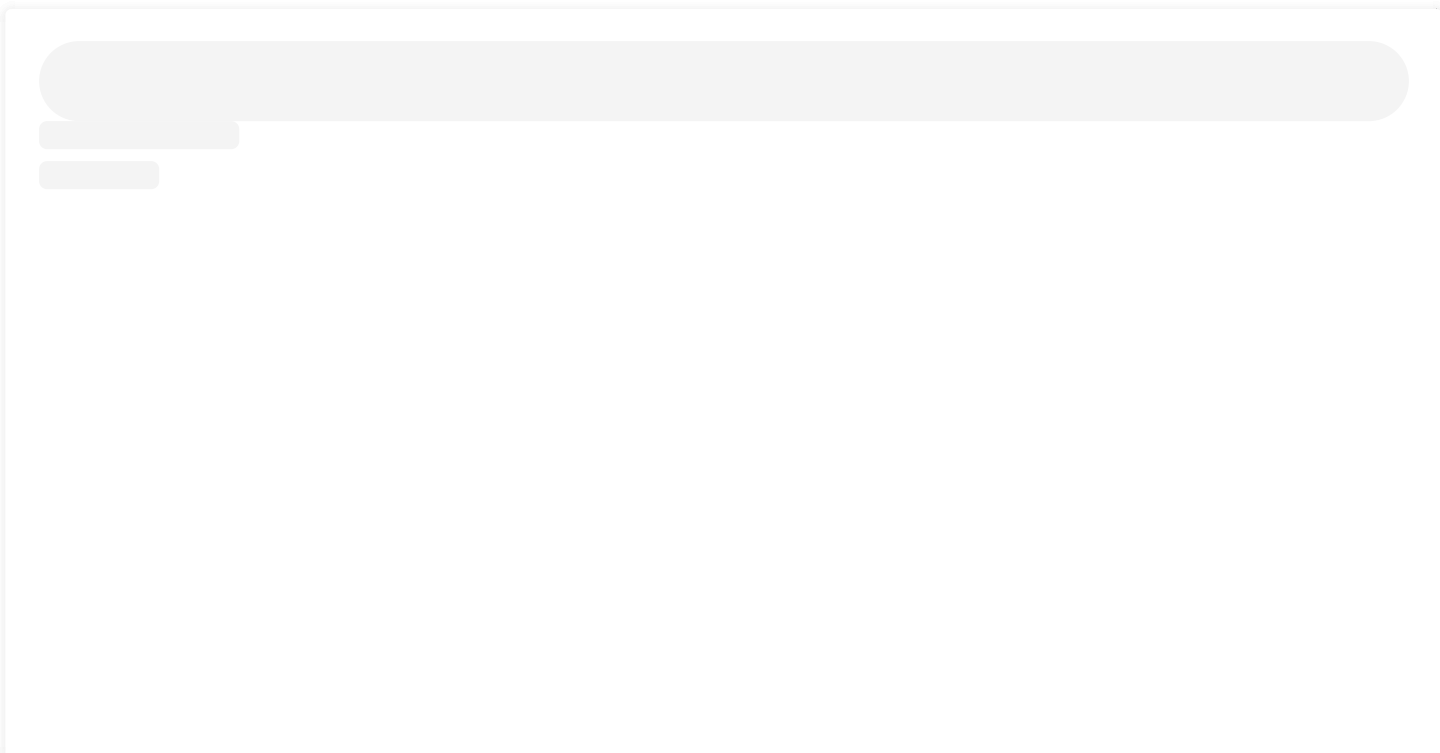
Billy Porter has stepped away from Cabaret due to a "serious case of sepsis," a common condition among people living with HIV.

September 16, 2025 By Laura Schmidt

The [Broadway](#) revival of Cabaret will soon have its final performance after its leading man, Billy Porter, developed "a serious case of sepsis," according to a [social media post](#) from the production.

"His doctors are confident that he will make a full recovery but have advised him to maintain a restful schedule," the social media post says.

Porter, 55, a three-time Tony Award winner, had been performing the role of Emcee, which will be now covered by Marty Lauter and David Merino. The production also announced that Cabaret will have its final performance at New York's August Wilson Theater on September 21 rather than October 19.

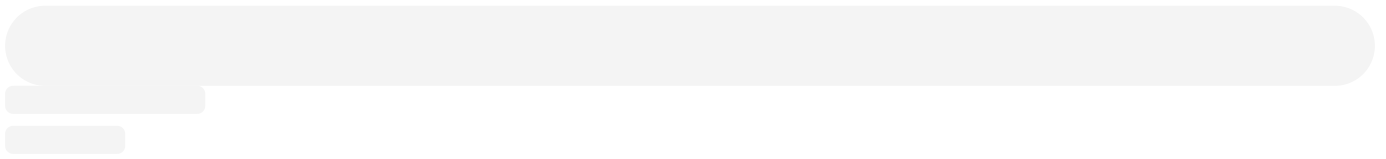




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A post shared by Cabaret at the Kit Kat Club (@kitkatclubnyc)

In 2021, Porter, revealed he has [been living with HIV since 2007](#). HIV gradually attacks and destroys the immune system's infection-fighting CD4 cells. Without treatment, the immune system ultimately weakens such that the body becomes vulnerable to other diseases, like hepatitis, tuberculosis and sepsis.



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In fact, a [2020 study](#) found that sepsis or infection were the top reasons for hospitalization for people living with [HIV](#) in the United States and Canada between 2005 and 2015.

Sepsis develops very quickly when a person's immune system has a dangerous reaction to an infection. It can cause extensive inflammation that can give rise to tissue damage, organ failure and even death, according to the [Cleveland Clinic](#).

With quick diagnosis and treatment, many people with mild sepsis survive. Treatment options include antibiotics, IV fluids, vasopressor medications to maintain healthy blood pressure, surgery and supportive care in case of serious side effects such as organ failure.

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