HIV Vaccine Awareness Day 2022

What have we learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, and what's the future of HIV vaccine research? Find out this #HVAD2022.

May 18, 2022 By Trent Straube

Wednesday, May 18, is HIV Vaccine Awareness Day (HVAD) 2022. It's an exciting time for vaccine research, marked by the speed with which COVID-19 vaccines were developed. At the same time, the seemingly fast advances in the field led many to wonder, Where is the vaccine to protect against HIV? HVAD offers a chance to explore these topics and to thank the researchers, advocates and volunteers involved in HIV vaccine development.

HVAD is spearheaded by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), which is part of the National Institutes of Health and is overseen by Anthony Fauci, MD, who has been in the global spotlight for his leadership during the COVID-19 and HIV epidemics. (You can download sharable graphics and sample text for social media on CDC.gov; examples are posted in this article.)

> 5/18 is HIV Vaccine Awareness Day, a day to recognize the volunteers, community members, and researchers working to find a safe and effective vaccine to prevent #HIV. Such a vaccine, along w/ existing HIV treatment and prevention strategies, would help to #EndHIVEpidemic. #HVAD pic.twitter.com/a3FCqcw2TY
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> — AETC NCRC (@AETCNCRC) May 16, 2022

To read more about HIV vaccine research, especially as it relates to COVID-19, check out the collection of POZ articles under #HIV Vaccine. You'll find headlines such as "New Study Tests

Three mRNA HIV Vaccine Candidates" and "A Shot in the Dark: We got COVID-19 vaccines in record time, so why are HIV vaccines taking so long?"

Outside the United States, several other organizations promote HVAC and their own work in vaccine development. AVAC, a group that raises global support for HIV prevention, marks HVAC 2022 with a series of webinars. As AVAC explains:

> Just two years ago, for HVAD 2020, AVAC highlighted the connections between COVID-19 and HIV, and outlined their implications in Five "P"s to Watch. Two years later, those insights on "Platforms, Process, Partnerships, Payers and Participatory Practices that Drive Vaccine Development" remain critical. The field has continued to build on those insights as it considers priorities for the HIV vaccine field today—and tomorrow.
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> Because recent results from major HIV vaccine trials have had disappointments and reframed the questions the field must ask, we all need to act with urgency to develop new and faster models for advancing HIV vaccine science that can adapt quickly to what is learned. And the field must continue to push new models for equitably delivering the fruits of that science.

This #HVAD get the latest on HIV vaccine R&D. Register for our webinar series May 18, 24 & 31 https://t.co/z8AFpBc0oJ @KaleebuPontiano @EthelMakila @ntandoy @NinaRussellMD @robin_shattock @NIAIDNews@dukemedicine @IAVI @ragoninstitute @DTHF_SA@apha_sa @HelpEndHIV @MRC_Uganda pic.twitter.com/DVNQEKJnGZ

— AVAC (@HIVpxresearch) May 16, 2022

In observance of the 25th anniversary of HIV Vaccine Awareness Day, AVAC offers these three webinars and descriptions of each (click on the title of each to register):

PLATFORMS & PIPELINES

“Platforms & pipelines for developing new approaches to HIV vaccine research”

Wednesday May 18, 10 a.m. ET

Description: COVID-19 ushered in a new “Golden Age” in research on vaccines using a previously unproven delivery platform—messenger RNA (mRNA). mRNA vaccines hit the target in COVID, but will they work in HIV? What antigen or combination of antigens should it deliver to be effective? Join this webinar or use this fact sheet to learn more about what researchers have learned, what remains to be discovered about mRNA and HIV vaccines, and about the HIV mRNA HIV vaccine studies now underway.

Participants: Bart Haynes (Duke University), Nina Russel (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation) and Ntando Yola (Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation)

PROCESSES

“Processes that offer innovation on the traditional phase I/II/III approach to research.”

Tuesday May 24, 10 a.m. ET

Description: Biomedical research has evolved more rapidly in recent years than in any time in human history. New bioengineered platforms and products are changing the ways diseases are treated and prevented. And new global commitments to sharing information and data are finally moving the needle toward making research a truly global enterprise. In many ways, though, HIV vaccine trial design remains stuck in the 20th century.

New approaches to research such as experimental medicine vaccine trials (EMVTs) offer the prospect of answering crucial questions safely and quickly. But the commercial, legal and regulatory frameworks are not designed to move HIV vaccine research through the pipeline with greater certainty, ease and speed. And community engagement models for these next-gen research approaches are still in development. Join us to discuss the opportunities and challenges of new approaches to vaccine research, and how advocates can help maximize the potential of a 21st century HIV vaccine research agenda.

Participants: Gail Broder (HIV Vaccine Trials Network), Pontiano Kaleebu (Medical Research Council-UK) and Robin Shattock (Imperial College)

PROSPECTS

“Prospects for HIV vaccine products in development, and for new approaches that may need more support”

Tuesday May 31, 10 a.m. ET

Description: Thanks to the efforts to tens of thousands of volunteers, researchers and advocates, the world has learned infinitely more about the human immune system, vaccine science and HIV than was known when HIV Vaccine Awareness Day was first commemorated 25 years ago, in 1997. Given the current state of HIV vaccine science, the broader HIV prevention landscape, and what's been learned through COVID, how should HIV vaccine research move into the future? How can we best use that hard-earned knowledge to make choices about HIV vaccines in development now, and chart a course for which products on the horizon have the best chances of achieving their ultimate goal?

Participants: Galit Alter (Harvard University), William Kilembe (Zambia Emory HIV Research Project), Ethel Makila (International AIDS Vaccine Initiative) and Mary Marovich (NIAID)
