HIV Vaccine Awareness Day 2026

#HVAD is Monday, May 18. Although a preventive HIV vaccine remains elusive, a promising strategy is currently in clinical trials.

May 18, 2026 By Trent Straube

Monday, May 18, marks HIV Vaccine Awareness Day (#HVAD) 2026. Each year, it presents an opportunity to honor scientists, healthcare professionals, volunteers, community members and others working to develop a safe and effective preventive HIV vaccine.

This year's 29th annual HVAD coincides with the anniversary of the first international AIDS vaccine trial, launched in 1997. At the time, President Bill Clinton declared that "only a truly effective, preventive HIV vaccine can limit and eventually eliminate the threat of AIDS."

Today on #HIVVaccineAwarenessDay, we recognize the scientists, advocates and communities advancing vaccine research and the continued need for a safe and widely accessible HIV vaccine. Explore #IASPlus resources on HIV vaccine research: zurl.co/nRyTF #HVAD #HVAD2026 #RethinkRebuildRise

[image or embed]

— IAS - the International AIDS Society (@iasociety.bsky.social) May 18, 2026 at 6:08 AM

Below is a trailer for the new documentary The End of HIV: The Journey to a Vaccine:

You can read more about the documentary on HelpEndHIV.org. And go to AIDSVu.org to read a related interview with Jarissa Greenard, a community educator and recruiter at the Vanderbilt University Medical Center HIV Vaccine Program.

Although preventive HIV vaccines have remained out of grasp, scientists continue their efforts to develop an effective vaccine. In fact, in January, IAVI, a global nonprofit research group, announced it had administered the first doses of an experimental vaccine in in the IAVI G004 clinical trial. That vaccine strategy "aims to coach the immune system to produce broadly neutralizing antibodies that could provide broad protection against HIV," according to an IAVI statement.

The Journal of the International AIDS Society (JIAS) has published a #HIVVaccineAwarenessDay viewpoint calling for the inclusion of people living with #HIV in #bNAb vaccine trials. Read, share & join us in supporting inclusive vaccine research zurl.co/TSL1w #HVAD #HVAD2026 #RethinkRebuildRise

[image or embed]

— IAS - the International AIDS Society (@iasociety.bsky.social) May 18, 2026 at 8:09 AM

Until last year, HIV Vaccine Awareness Day had been spearheaded by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), as a way to raise awareness and educate the public about the importance of HIV vaccine research.

In 2025, however, the new Trump administration and Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. began dismantling the national health department, laying off federal workers, defunding research grants

and eliminating entire healthcare programs.

HIV vaccine research will be a core topic at #AIDS2026, with sessions & abstracts examining the latest science, research & prevention strategies. This #HIVVaccineAwarenessDay, explore related programme content. #HVAD #HVAD2026 #RethinkRebuildRise

[image or embed]

— IAC - the International AIDS Conference (@aidsconference.bsky.social) May 18, 2026 at 7:09 AM

One of the casualties of the Trump administration's war on science and public health has been vaccine research, including HIV vaccines. For example, Duke University in North Carolina, long a center of nationally funded HIV vaccine research, did not have its funding cycle approved this year. For more details, read "Trump Cuts Threaten to Halt Two Decades of HIV Vaccine Research."

To learn more in POZ, click #HIV Vaccine. You'll find updates on current vaccine research and articles such as "A Shot in the Dark: We got COVID-19 vaccines in record time. Why are HIV vaccines taking so long?"

Click here to learn more about 2026 HIV and AIDS awareness days and for a printable poster.

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