International AIDS Conference Kicks Off in Montreal—and on Your Screens

Held in person and virtually, AIDS 2022 is the world's largest HIV-related gathering. From cure news to advocacy, here's what to expect.

July 27, 2022 By Trent Straube

The 24th International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2022) will take place in Montreal as well as virtually from Friday, July 29, to Tuesday, August 2, with preconference events starting July 27. Spearheaded by the International AIDS Society (IAS) and held every other year at a different city across the globe, the mammoth event is the world's largest HIV-related gathering.

The AIDS 2022 theme is "Re-engage and follow the science." This year's conference promises to include reports on the latest science and studies on HIV criminalization, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), coinfections, monkeypox, DoxyPEP, another HIV cure case (see the tweet below) and much more.

> BREAKING - A 66-year-old Caucasian man who received a stem cell transplant is the fourth known person to go into HIV remission. #AIDS2022
>
> — IAC - the International AIDS Conference (@AIDS_conference) July 27, 2022

More specifically, additional scientific highlights expected at AIDS 2022 include:

- Eagerly awaited results from DoxyPEP, a study showing that a dose of doxycycline after sex can significantly reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infections;

- Updates on monkeypox prevention, treatment and policy issues, including implications for people living with HIV;

- New data on the impact of chronic injection opioid use among people living with HIV;

- Compelling new research showing how age-of-consent requirements for HIV testing and HIV criminalization laws are barriers to HIV prevention and care;

- New studies on HIV and coinfections, including tuberculosis and hepatitis, as well as research on hepatitis C reinfection;

- The latest studies on posttraumatic stress disorder risk and mental health service utilization among people living with HIV.

According to AIDS2022.org, the conference will "define future research agendas, shift latest evidence to action, and chart a new consensus on overcoming the HIV epidemic as a threat to public health and individual well-being."

Breaking news from the conference is usually posted on social media, including via the AIDS 2022 Twitter account:

#Botswana???????? has become one of the very few countries to surpass the @UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets!

Botswana Ministry of Health's Madisa Mine ???????? presenting the results from a large population-based survey, finding data at 95.1% - 98% - 97.9%. #AIDS2022 pic.twitter.com/XSRnyblTSl

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The international AIDS conferences draw together scientists, doctors, advocates, politicians, policymakers, people living with HIV and other stakeholders. Groundbreaking research is presented, best practices are shared, voices are heard and friendships are forged.

Below is a greeting to attendees by Christian Dubé, the minister of health and social services in Quebec, the Canadian province that's home to Montreal:

This marks the second time Montreal has hosted an IAS AIDS conference. The first time was 1989. For more about that, watch the "Welcome to Montreal" video at the top of this article.

Friday morning's opening session and panel discussion explore the sources for the world's growing apathy regarding HIV and AIDS and why and how we must reengage.

As conference organizers point out, attendees of AIDS 2022 can look forward to:

- Over 100 hybrid speaker sessions and panel debates live from Montreal and around the world;
- E-posters showcasing cutting-edge research with on-demand presentations;
- The largest-ever scholarship program, providing registration, travel and internet support;
- Multiple opportunities for networking and engaging in speaker Q&As;
- The Global Village and Youth Programme in Montreal and virtually;
- On-demand 24/7 access to all session recordings via the conference platform;
- In-person and virtual exhibition and daily educational workshops;

- Tailored live, semi-live and prerecorded satellite symposia and preconference meeting packages hosted in Montreal and virtually.

The AIDS 2022 program is available online and includes detailed descriptions of sessions, panels, abstracts and happenings at the Global Village as well as channels via which you can watch many of these events.

This year marks the first time the conference will be held both in person and virtually. All previous gatherings took place in person. AIDS 2020 had been scheduled for San Francisco—a venue that drew much criticism from advocates—but then the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the globe, forcing organizers to pivot to virtual formats.

If you're visiting AIDS 2022 virtually, click over to the POZ exhibition booth. And be sure to check POZ.com for regular reports on the science and research being presented at the conference. For a roundup, click the hashtag #AIDS 2022.

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