Russian Bombs Destroy 62 Million HIV Prevention Items in Ukraine

The attack didn't hit HIV treatment supplies, but it could affect the nearly 300,000 Ukrainians who access prevention services.

August 14, 2026 By Trent Straube

On July 19, Russian missiles struck a warehouse in Ukraine and wiped out nearly 62 million items used to prevent HIV, including condoms and harm reduction supplies, such as syringes and needles, reports The Lancet. The lost supplies were worth about $3 million.

The attack destroyed most of Ukraine's 2027 supplies for HIV prevention programs. About 300,000 people access prevention services, and activists worry that the nation will see an increase in HIV cases as a result of the bombings. If the supplies are not replaced by November, at least 16,000 people could contract HIV, double the number normally expected, advocates tell The New York Times.

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Ukraine has one of the worst HIV epidemics in Europe, largely driven by the use of contaminated needles among injection drug users.

Alliance for Public Health (APH), a Ukrainian nongovernmental organization, operated the warehouse and is now working with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and other humanitarian organizations to replace the destroyed supplies. Luckily, a supply of condoms and other prevention items to be used in 2026 had been recently moved to a different warehouse and weren't affected in Russia's July 19 attack on civilian structures.

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"We cannot just replace condoms with sympathy," Andriy Klepikov, the executive director of APH, told the Times. He noted that many Ukrainians can't access prevention and rely on APH's supplies to stay HIV negative.

Winnie Byanyima, the executive director of UNAIDS (the Joint United Nations Progamme on HIV/AIDS), described Russia's attack on civilian infrastructure as a "breach of international humanitarian law," noting, "There are laws of war. You're not supposed to target medical facilities, schools for children."

At the start of the Ukraine war in 2022, it was estimated that 260,000 Ukrainians were living with HIV before the war broke out and 152,000 of them were taking daily lifesaving meds to suppress their virus.

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