

Rise Above HIV T-Shirt

October 23, 2012 By [Shawn Decker](#)

I've been a longtime, uncloseted fan of professional wrestling. Or, as it is called today, "sports entertainment". I grew up watching it, and I met a lot of my favorite wrestlers (most notably Ric Flair) in the months after my HIV diagnosis at age 11. I love the escapism involved in watching, and can attest to how it really helped distract me at the time from a new reality that involved living with a life-threatening illness.


Today? I still watch. And it's nice to see World Wrestling Entertainment recognizing October as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month by partnering with the Susan G. Komen Foundation. Their biggest star, John Cena, is sporting a new, pink t-shirt to raise money and awareness. He has also granted 300 wishes during his career for the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

If I wore a hat, it would be off to him.

Of course, I'd jump off of my couch if I ever saw the WWE raise awareness about HIV. Wouldn't that be awesome? Can you imagine the "big red machine" Kane wearing a big red ribbon on his chest while choke-slammng a hapless opponent? Or R. Truth telling Little Jimmy that HIV disproportionately affects people of color, and that Little Jimmy should wrap his little jimmy when he gets old enough to have sex? (For non-wrestling fans, "Little Jimmy" is the invisible friend of African-American WWE Superstar, R. Truth.)

I'm not holding my breath waiting for those moments, which is why I asked one of my best friends (and Synthetic Division bandmate!) Josh to design a shirt, inspired by the one John Cena is now wearing to raise awareness for cancer.

Here are both!

 had to pose for quite a few hours in a heavily air-conditioned studio whilst Josh drew that, just in case anyone thought that this process was easy for me. Never mind the years of diet and weight-training. On a serious note, the image Josh came up with encapsulates how I feel about living with HIV for 25 years- I feel strong, confident and ready to fight on. I'm getting a small run of these shirts pressed up through [Crazy Horse Studio](#)- one for every year I've been kicking HIV's ass.

Want a shirt? Simply PayPal \$25 to shawn@mypetvirus.com (that includes shipping- add \$5 for international orders for a total of \$30). About ten have already been spoken for, so there are only 15 left. *Please specify your shirt size!*

If you'd like to buy the John Cena shirt, visit wweshop.com

Hope this message finds you well, no matter you are rising above today.

Positively Yours,
Shawn

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

<http://beta.docker.poz.com/blog/rise-above-hiv-t-shi>