

Vaccine Research Urgent In HIV Prevention



(NAPSA)—The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that at the end of 2006, more than 1.1 million adults and children were living with HIV in the United States. CDC also estimates that African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos and gay and bisexual men of all races continue to be disproportionately impacted by HIV/AIDS.

“These statistics tell us that access to comprehensive HIV care and treatment is needed now more than ever, and that new prevention tools, including a vaccine, are critical for combating HIV/AIDS,” says Margaret Johnston, Ph.D., assistant director for HIV/AIDS vaccines at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), a part of the U.S. National Institutes of Health. “As long as HIV/AIDS continues to devastate communities across the U.S. and around the world, we must continue to search for an effective HIV vaccine.”

There are at least two possible ways an HIV vaccine might work—it could prevent HIV infection and/or reduce the severity of HIV-related disease once a person is infected. During the past 20 years, tens of thousands of volunteers have safely participated in HIV vaccine research. The HIV

Why is HIV vaccine research urgent?

- Today, more than 1.1 million people are living with HIV in the U.S.
- Every year, an estimated 56,000 people become infected with HIV in the U.S.
- As the number of people living with HIV grows, so does the risk of HIV transmission to others.
- Historically, vaccines have been the most powerful weapon against infectious diseases like polio, measles and hepatitis B.

vaccines being studied do not contain the actual HIV virus, so they cannot cause HIV infection.

Discovering a successful HIV vaccine that works for all people can only be done with the enrollment of study volunteers from all races and ethnicities. Community involvement and education are essential to the success of HIV vaccine research, and initiatives are underway to help people understand why HIV vaccine research is relevant to them and how they can help. To learn more about HIV vaccine research in the United States, please visit <http://betheneration.nih.gov>.