The Proven Research Behind the Fight Against *HIV/AIDS*

Cure COALITION

HIV/AIDS went from a near-certain death sentence to a manageable, and often preventable, condition because of decades of careful research that included animal studies and rigorous scientific standards. Much of what scientists know about how HIV spreads, how it damages the immune system, and how to stop it came from animal studies that gave researchers a model to test real solutions to this disease.

See the breakthroughs patients depend on today — and the science still protecting them.



A Model of the Virus Itself

When scientists discovered SIV, a virus in monkeys closely related to HIV, they gained something researchers didn't have before: a living system that mirrored how HIV causes disease in people. That discovery became the backbone of decades of HIV/AIDS research that followed.



AZT, the First Approved Treatment

Before AZT ever reached a single patient, it was tested in animal cells and models to see whether it could block the virus without causing harm. Those results gave the FDA the confidence to approve AZT in 1987, making it the first widely available treatment for AIDS.



The Combination Therapy Breakthrough

By the mid-1990s, drug combinations tested and refined using animal models helped transform HIV/AIDS from a fatal diagnosis into a condition many patients could live with for decades. This shift, known as combination antiretroviral therapy, remains one of the most significant achievements in modern medicine.



Stopping HIV Before It Starts

Macaque studies showed that daily and even intermittent doses of the drugs now sold as Truvada could block infection after repeated exposure to the virus. Those studies gave scientists the confidence to move PrEP into human trials, where it proved highly effective at preventing new infections.



Protecting the Next Generation

HIV/AIDS research continues to rely on animal models to study how the virus persists in the body, evaluate new prevention strategies, and search for a cure. Without this foundation, the treatment and prevention tools that have saved millions may never have been possible.

“Animal research is invaluable for tackling some of the most confounding human diseases, including neurodegenerative conditions, cancer, metabolic disorders, cardiovascular disease, and emerging infections.”

Harvard Medical School



Congress does not need to choose between innovation and safety.

HIV/AIDS is a case study in what proven research methods like animal studies can accomplish: a disease once considered a death sentence is now preventable and treatable because scientists had the tools to understand it and test solutions responsibly. That progress should not be put at risk by discarding research methods before reliable alternatives are fully validated.

Protect the proven research methods that transformed and continue to advance HIV/AIDS care.

Cure Coalition

CURECOALITION.ORG