### August 31, 2015 – History part 1

### 1981: From GRID to AIDS

The AIDS epidemic officially began on June 5, 1981, when the U.S. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Centers_for_Disease_Control_and_Prevention%22%20%5Co%20%22Centers%20for%20Disease%20Control%20and%20Prevention%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) in its *[Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morbidity_and_Mortality_Weekly_Report%22%20%5Co%20%22Morbidity%20and%20Mortality%20Weekly%20Report%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)* newsletter reported unusual clusters of [Pneumocystis pneumonia (PCP)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pneumocystis_pneumonia_%28PCP%29%22%20%5Co%20%22Pneumocystis%20pneumonia%20%28PCP%29%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) caused by a form of *[Pneumocystis carinii](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pneumocystis_pneumonia_%28PCP%29%22%20%5Co%20%22Pneumocystis%20pneumonia%20%28PCP%29%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)* (now recognized as a distinct species *[Pneumocystis jirovecii](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pneumocystis_pneumonia_%28PCP%29%22%20%5Co%20%22Pneumocystis%20pneumonia%20%28PCP%29%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)*) in five homosexual men in Los Angeles.

Over the next 18 months, more PCP clusters were discovered among otherwise healthy men in cities throughout the country, along with other opportunistic diseases (such as [Kaposi's sarcoma](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaposi%27s_sarcoma%22%20%5Co%20%22Kaposi%27s%20sarcoma%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) and persistent, generalized lymphadenopathy), common in [immunosuppressed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immunosuppressed%22%20%5Co%20%22Immunosuppressed%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) patients.

In June 1982, a report of a group of cases amongst gay men in [Southern California](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_California%22%20%5Co%20%22Southern%20California%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) suggested that a [sexually transmitted](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sexually_transmitted_disease%22%20%5Co%20%22Sexually%20transmitted%20disease%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) [infectious agent](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Infectious_disease%22%20%5Co%20%22Infectious%20disease%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) might be the [etiological](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etiology%22%20%5Co%20%22Etiology%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) agent, and the syndrome was initially termed "GRID", or [gay-related immune deficiency](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gay-related_immune_deficiency%22%20%5Co%20%22Gay-related%20immune%20deficiency%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).

Health authorities soon realized that nearly half of the people identified with the syndrome were not homosexual men. The same opportunistic infections were also reported among [hemophiliacs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hemophiliacs%22%20%5Co%20%22Hemophiliacs%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), heterosexual [intravenous drug](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drug_injection%22%20%5Co%20%22Drug%20injection%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) users, and Haitian immigrants—leading some researchers to call it the "4H" disease.

By August 1982, the disease was being referred to by its new CDC-coined name: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

### May 1983: LAV

In May 1983, doctors from Dr. [Luc Montagnier](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luc_Montagnier%22%20%5Co%20%22Luc%20Montagnier%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)'s team at the [Pasteur Institute](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pasteur_Institute%22%20%5Co%20%22Pasteur%20Institute%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) in France reported that they had isolated a new [retrovirus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Retrovirus%22%20%5Co%20%22Retrovirus%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) from [lymphoid ganglions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lymph_node%22%20%5Co%20%22Lymph%20node%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) that they believed was the cause of AIDS. The virus was later named lymphadenopathy-associated virus (LAV) and a sample was sent to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, which was later passed to the [National Cancer Institute](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Cancer_Institute%22%20%5Co%20%22National%20Cancer%20Institute%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) (NCI).

### May 1984: HTLV-III

In May 1984 a team led by [Robert Gallo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Gallo%22%20%5Co%20%22Robert%20Gallo%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) of the United States confirmed the discovery of the virus, but they renamed it human T lymphotropic virus type III ([HTLV-III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_T-lymphotropic_virus%22%20%5Cl%20%22HTLV-III_and_HTLV-IV%22%20%5Co%20%22Human%20T-lymphotropic%20virus%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)).

### January 1985: both found to be the same

In January 1985, a number of more-detailed reports were published concerning LAV and HTLV-III, and by March it was clear that the viruses were the same, were from the same source, and were the etiological agent of AIDS.

### May 1986: the name HIV

In May 1986, the [International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Committee_on_Taxonomy_of_Viruses%22%20%5Co%20%22International%20Committee%20on%20Taxonomy%20of%20Viruses%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) ruled that both names should be dropped and a new name, HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), be used.

### Nobel

Whether Gallo or Montagnier deserve more credit for the discovery of the virus that causes AIDS has been a matter of [considerable controversy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Gallo%22%20%5Cl%20%22HIV.2FAIDS_research_and_subsequent_controversy%22%20%5Co%20%22Robert%20Gallo%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank). Together with his colleague [Françoise Barré-Sinoussi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fran%C3%A7oise_Barr%C3%A9-Sinoussi%22%20%5Co%20%22Fran%C3%A7oise%20Barr%C3%A9-Sinoussi%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), Montagnier was awarded one half of the 2008 [Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nobel_Prize_in_Physiology_or_Medicine%22%20%5Co%20%22Nobel%20Prize%20in%20Physiology%20or%20Medicine%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) for his "discovery of human immunodeficiency virus".  [Harald zur Hausen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harald_zur_Hausen%22%20%5Co%20%22Harald%20zur%20Hausen%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) also shared the prize for his discovery that [human papilloma virus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_papilloma_virus%22%20%5Co%20%22Human%20papilloma%20virus%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) leads to [cervical cancer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cervical_cancer%22%20%5Co%20%22Cervical%20cancer%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), but Gallo was left out. Gallo said that it was "a disappointment" that he was not named a co-recipient. Montagnier said he was "surprised" Gallo was not recognized by the Nobel Committee: "It was important to prove that HIV was the cause of AIDS, and Gallo had a very important role in that. I'm very sorry for Robert Gallo."