

Anti-HIV/AIDS Medicines and Vaccines in Development

Written by

Wednesday, 15 December 2010 18:53

American biopharmaceutical research companies are working on 100 new medicines and vaccines against HIV/AIDS and related conditions.

In its new report, the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) states that many novel approaches are being taken to overcome the disease.

For example, a medicine under development is designed to spare healthy cells by attacking only infected cells. A new class of anti-HIV medicines is intended to prevent the HIV virus from breaking through cell membranes. One vaccine being worked on is administered through a skin patch. Another vaccine in development uses a weakened common cold adenovirus that helps boost the immune system.

Despite the fact that scientists have made phenomenal advances in understanding the disease and have discovered 31 approved medicines used to control the virus, there is still no cure and no vaccine to prevent transmission. Moreover, the virus has proved its capacity to mutate and become resistant to available treatments, resulting in a constant need for new medicines.

"We have progressed in just a few decades from having no medicines available for HIV/AIDS patients to having highly effective treatments even against multi-drug-resistant forms of the virus," said John Castellani, PhRMA's President and CEO. "We have moved from complicated drug cocktails that needed to be taken around the clock to simple, once-a-day treatments. However, we have not defeated HIV/AIDS, and we cannot afford to become complacent."

Over a million Americans today live with HIV infection. New and better treatments have slashed death rates. Yet, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) over 18,000 people still succumb to AIDS every year in the United States.

Although the disease continues to take a terrible toll, UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidib recently revealed, "The rate of new HIV infections has dropped nearly 20% over the last decade. We can say with confidence and conviction that we have broken the trajectory of the AIDS pandemic." Still, an estimated 7,000 people a day worldwide continue to be newly infected—a number that could be cut drastically by a vaccine.

Currently, American biopharmaceutical research companies have 33 vaccines in development.

Video Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISYRuk0BxTg>

PhRMA Internet Address: <http://www.phrma.org>

For information on how innovative medicines save lives: <http://www.innovation.org>

For information on the Partnership for Prescription Assistance: <http://www.pparx.org>

For more information on public health emergencies: <http://www.rxresponse.org>

For information on the danger of imported drugs: <http://www.buysafedrugs.info>