

THE AIDS PROJECT NEWSLETTER

A Publication of The AIDS Project, 22 Monument Square, Fifth Floor, Portland, Maine 04101

July 1989

Volume 2 Number 5

THE TEST: *Understanding HIV-Antibody Testing*

(Reprinted with permission from the Gay Men's Health Crisis of New York City)

You probably have heard that there is a blood test that detects whether you have been infected with the virus that causes AIDS. To help you make a decision about being tested, this article will explain what the test results mean and will examine the possible advantages and disadvantages of being tested.

WHAT IS AIDS?

AIDS, which stands for "acquired immuno-deficiency syndrome," is a disease that destroys the immune system, the body's main defense against infections. People with AIDS can get serious, and sometimes fatal, infections which usually do not affect people with healthy immune systems.

Most leading scientists believe that AIDS is caused by a virus called HIV, which stands for "human immunodeficiency virus." HIV is transmitted when an infected person's blood, semen, or vaginal fluid enter another person's body. Usually the virus is spread during unprotected sex (sex without a condom) or when people share infected needles to take drugs.

There are no cases of HIV transmission by casual contact such as hugging, touching, kissing, sharing household utensils or being near a person with AIDS who sneezes or coughs. While small amounts of the virus have been found in saliva and tears, there are no known cases of HIV transmission through contact with these bodily fluids.

WHAT IS THE TEST?

When HIV enters the body, the body produces antibodies in response to the virus. The test detects the presence of these antibodies in a small sample of blood which is usually drawn from the arm. The test **does not** detect whether you have AIDS - it only tells you if your body has produced antibodies in response to the virus that causes AIDS.

While there is a test that detects whether the AIDS virus itself is in the body, this test is not routinely administered at HIV antibody testing sites and clinics. It is available only upon special request by a doctor.

WHAT DOES HIV-POSITIVE MEAN?

If you have developed antibodies to the virus, you are HIV-positive. This means that at some point you were exposed to the virus and have been infected with HIV.

Being HIV positive **does not** mean that you now have AIDS or that you will definitely develop AIDS in the future. There is a wide range of responses to HIV infection. Some

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AIDS Vaccine Volunteers Needed

By David Ketchum

Volunteers are still needed to participate in an AIDS vaccine study being conducted at The National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland. If you are HIV-negative, in good health, male, between the ages of 18 and 60, you are needed. Travel expenses and room and board are covered by NIH. If you are interested, please call Margaret Easter, R.N. or Victoria Davey, R.N. at (301)-496-7196.

It will be helpful if you tell the operator that it is in reference to the GP160 protocol. Several Maine residents, including myself, have been part of this vaccine study since it started in the fall of 1987. I cannot say enough about this study except perhaps that the rewards are many!! If you need further coaxing, please feel free to call me (David Ketchum) at 934-4997. I will return all calls.

Insurance Cut Off Your Pentamidine?

(Reprinted with permission from The PWA Coalition Newslines of New York City, June 1989)

If you have been denied insurance coverage for aerosolized pentamidine in your locality, please contact National Gay Rights Advocates at 540 Castro Street, San Francisco, California 94114 or your local AIDS activist organizations to register your outrage.

Earlier this year, the Prudential Insurance Company sent out letters to AIDS, ARC and HIV-positive clients, informing them that it would no longer cover the cost of aerosolized pentamidine treatments until the FDA grants final approval.

Unconfirmed reports from local hospitals tell us that other large insurance carriers are following suit-but won't tell us any more than that. We still don't know how many carriers are denying this coverage (besides Prudential), and exactly how many people have been affected by this inhumane decision. Naturally, the insurance companies would like to keep us all in the date.

We are Pentamidine Advocates for Necessary Treatment (PANT), a grass-roots group of people with HIV-disease and their friends. Our lives have been drastically affected by this cutoff in insurance coverage. Life with HIV can be challenging and expensive enough as it is. How many people can afford the extra \$200 or more per month to cover the full costs associated with Aerosolized Pentamidine treatments?

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Licensing Update

By Greg Lugliani (from *Treatment News*, Gay Men's Health Crisis of New York)

Having navigated the drug approval bureaucracy for some time now, three experimental drugs have recently received judgment from FDA advisory committee panels which carry great weight with FDA policy makers. Two of these drugs, aerosolized pentamidine and ganciclovir (DHPG), have secured recommendation for approval, and thus verge on clearing the FDA process. The immunomodulator, Imreg-1, however, has been sent back to the clinical trials drawing board, as Phase III test results have left FDA unconvinced that the drug works.

Imreg-1: Responding to FDA's encouragement of pharmaceutical companies to seek early release under the Treatment IND program for AIDS, Imreg-1's manufacturer, Imreg, Inc., applied for that designation in October, 1988. FDA refused the request, maintaining that the data was (sic) insufficient, the trial was not adequately blinded, and that inclusion criteria were not properly observed. FDA itself bluntly argued that the drug was no better than a placebo. However, in April, 1989, the same advisory committee unanimously urged Imreg and FDA to work together to design and conduct new tests for Imreg-1's efficacy, stating "there is a feeling that there may be some effects from this drug." At present FDA has officially denied Imreg's request for Treatment IND status, but is offering to work with the manufacturer "if they [Imreg] want to meet for further clinical studies." Apparently, Imreg, Inc. is taking FDA at its word: Said an Imreg spokesman, "We are still, despite the debate, knocking at the FDA door."

Aerosolized Pentamidine: Although commonly used to prevent PCP for some time, not until early 1989 did FDA loosen the restrictions on aerosolized pentamidine by granting Treatment IND status. Two pharmaceutical companies, LymphoMed, Inc. and Fisons produce the drug. Since the company that secures approval first has exclusive marketing rights for seven years under the Orphan Drug Act (which applies to drugs that will be used by

fewer than 200,000 people), a heated race to complete tests has been underway between the two companies. On May 1, 1989, FDA's Anti-Infective Advisory Committee held a public hearing on the safety and efficacy of aerosolized pentamidine, during which both LymphoMed and Fisons presented trial results. LymphoMed's data supports a dose of 300 mg monthly for most effective prophylaxis. On the other hand, Fisons presented data from a Canadian trial that yielded impressive results with a lower dose (60 mg twice monthly). At this point it is unclear which company will win the license, but the panel unanimously recommended approval of the drug for both primary and secondary prophylaxis against PCP or people with T4 counts of 200 or below. The recommendation hastens the granting of aerosolized pentamidine's New Drug Application (NDA), and full licensing is expected in weeks.

Ganciclovir (DHPG): Manufactured by Syntex for use against CMV retinitis, ganciclovir has also received its share of mixed signals from FDA. Although available liberally on a compassionate use basis and generally regarded as effective in preventing AIDS-related blindness, FDA's Anti-Infective Advisory Committee denied Syntex's request for a license in October, 1987, stating that more data on long-term use of the drug were needed. In December, 1988, NIAID and Syntex restricted the availability of ganciclovir in order to gather acceptable clinical data. Persons whose eyesight was not immediately threatened were ushered into a delayed treatment trial in order to receive the drug; those with threatened sight were allowed immediate access to ganciclovir. An outcry from activists caused FDA in early March to allow people with CMV retinitis access to the drug, even though they were not enrolled in the trial. At that time, FDA asked the Anti-Infective Advisory Committee to reconsider its earlier decision on approving ganciclovir. Therefore, on May 2, the committee held another hearing to assess the safety and efficacy of the drug. Test results from recent studies conducted in the U.S. and France by Syntex and independent researchers convinced the advisory committee to

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The AIDS Project Newsletter

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The AIDS Project is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing and promoting services to people with AIDS and AIDS related illnesses, advocacy regarding AIDS related issues and concerns, and AIDS related health education and information to the citizens of Maine.

An Urgent Appeal to the People of Maine

The Problem:

◆ More than 60 Maine residents have already died from AIDS: a 12-year-old boy from Lewiston, a father of two from Presque Isle, a pastry chef from Portland and a prisoner from Thomaston have been among those Maine residents whose lives have been claimed.

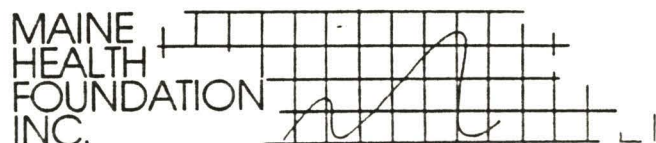
◆ During the first 4 months of 1989, 28 new cases of AIDS were diagnosed in Maine. This represents a dramatic rise over 1988, when the total number of cases diagnosed in the state was 25.

◆ 150 Mainers are currently living with AIDS. Cases range in age from 4 to 80. The number of cases will at least *double by January 1991!*

◆ Many people living with AIDS (PWAs) are trying to make ends meet on disability checks of as little as \$220 per month. In the past, the Maine Health Foundation has provided up to \$200 per month of financial assistance to PWAs to cover such basics as housing, childcare, and medical care when all other means of support have been exhausted.

◆ The rapid escalation of AIDS cases in Maine has created an unprecedented demand for assistance funds that far exceeds contributions.

◆ The Maine Health Foundation PWA Financial Assistance Fund is in crisis!

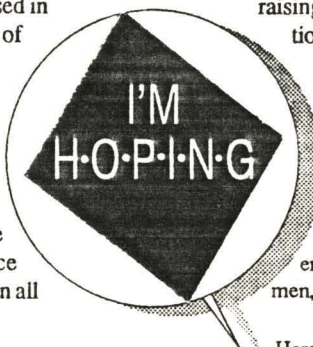


Funding AIDS-Related Programs Since 1983

The Solution:

Until now you may not have thought you could help. This is your opportunity to make a difference.

The Maine Health Foundation is a private, nonprofit, 100% volunteer organization. The Maine Health Foundation is Maine's only statewide fundraising organization for AIDS-related programs. Your contribution to the Maine Health Foundation PWA Financial Assistance Fund will go *directly* to PWAs in Maine.



The Maine Health Foundation has formed an important new membership opportunity known as Helping Other People in Need Generously (HOPING). In 1989 we hope to find 1,000 people who will make a difference by contributing \$200 annually. The \$200,000 raised will enable us to provide continued financial assistance to the men, women, and children who so desperately need your help.

Here's what HOPING membership will mean for you:

- ◆ HOPING members will have the satisfaction of knowing their tax-deductible donation is being used to dramatically enhance the quality of life of Maine people living with AIDS.
- ◆ HOPING members will receive membership cards entitling them to a 50% discount on admission to all Maine Health Foundation concerts, cruises and events.
- ◆ HOPING members will receive the Maine Health Foundation newsletter which will keep you informed about how your donation has made a difference to your neighbors in Maine.
- ◆ You will not be solicited again by the Maine Health Foundation throughout the year!

For the price of a fast food lunch (\$3.85) per week, you can make the difference. Please... give today. Give generously.

Yes, I'm HOPING!

- ☐ I want to become a member of HOPING with a tax-deductible donation of \$200.
- ☐ Check enclosed
- ☐ Charge my VISA/MasterCard
- Acct #
- Signature
- Expiration date
- ☐ Charge my VISA/MasterCard \$50 every quarter for one year.

- ☐ Yes, I want to help Maine people living with AIDS. Enclosed, my tax-deductible donation of \$

Name

Phone

Address

- ☐ You may ☐ You may not use my name in media publications.

Send this coupon & your donation to:
Maine Health Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 7329cbw, Portland, ME 04112
For more information call: 772-2717

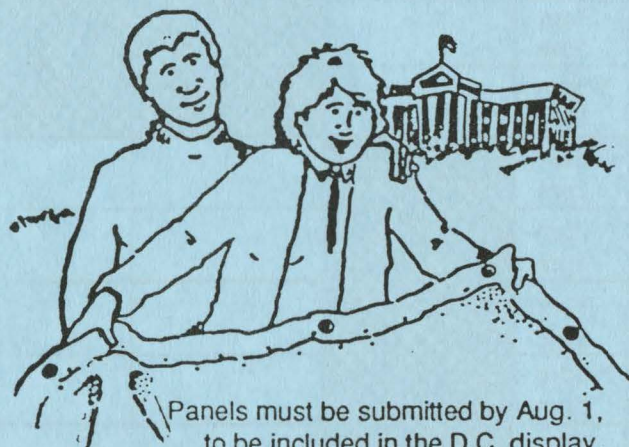
TAP

THE
NAMES
PROJECT

Join us in Washington, D.C. October, 1989

Although sections of the Quilt will continue to tour and to be displayed, this will be the last display of the Quilt in its entirety. Here's what you can do to help us take the Quilt and its powerful message to our nation's leaders.

1. **Write to your elected officials.** Tell them what the Quilt means to you. Tell them that you think it's important for them to join us in October. Send us a copy of your letter.
2. **Support the NAMES Project financially.** The Quilt now weighs over 16 tons and requires a support system to match. We depend entirely on donations and profits from the sale of merchandise.
3. **Become part of your local chapter.** Join the people in your community who are already planning for the return to D.C. We need your ideas and suggestions!
4. **Join us in Washington, D.C.** Nothing will make a stronger statement than your presence in D.C. We need 2500 volunteers to help us with everything from monitoring the Quilt to loading the truck. We need YOU in D.C., so send us this form as soon as possible!



Panels must be submitted by Aug. 1,
to be included in the D.C. display.

Enclosed is my contribution to help the Quilt return to Washington, D.C. ☐ \$20 ☐ \$35 ☐ \$60 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$____

The NAMES Project ♦ P.O. Box 14573 ♦ San Francisco ♦ CA 94114

The NAMES Project

Volunteer Registration — Washington, D.C. — October 5-8, 1989

Please print for mailing label. One form per volunteer.

Discount Airfare:**

Official Carrier: United 1-800-521-4041 (Daily 8am-11pm EDT)

Account #9425N

Co-Carrier: US Air 1-800-222-9800 (M-F 8:30am-6pm EDT)

Ask for the NAMES Project desk.

Discount Hotels:**

"D.C. Accommodations, Inc.": 1-800-554-2220

(M-F 9am-5pm EDT)

** These services save you money and benefit
The NAMES Project.

Name

Address

City, State Zip

Phone Day ()

Evening ()

Setup & Packup: We especially need you for this! The Quilt weighs 16 tons and requires a support system to match. Sunday evening "Packup" is always a **critical** time for us.

Quilt Monitor: Monitor an assigned area of the Quilt. Provide information and emotional support to the public.

Sales & Information: The NAMES Project supports itself through merchandise sales. Provide general information. Some physical (stock) work involved.

Media: Answer inquiries, assemble press packets, escort press.

Volunteer Support: Assist with volunteer registration, set up food, fill in for last minute jobs, general insanity, etc!

Complete and return by **August 15, 1989**

The NAMES Project

P.O. Box 14573

San Francisco, CA 94114

Chapter Affiliation?

Please report to volunteer check-in prior to your shift. (Afternoon shifts and all shifts of volunteer support people come 30 minutes early!). The morning shift will unload and lay out the Quilt EVERY DAY. The afternoon/evening shift will load it into the trucks EVERY DAY.

This is an outdoor display:

- wear layers of clothing (white or light-colored)
- sturdy, comfortable shoes
- bring flashlights for the evening shift (the headband kind works great)
- backpacks or fannypacks to hold all your stuff

Please mark with a small x the shifts you want to work. Write any comments on back of page.

Date	Time	Setup	Quilt	Sales	Media	Vol. Support
Thurs. Oct. 5	9am - 5pm					
	* 3pm - 11pm					
Fri. Oct. 6	8am - 2pm					
	2pm - 8pm					
Sat. Oct. 7	8am - 2pm					
	* 2pm - 8pm					
Sun. Oct. 8	8am - 2pm					
	* 2pm - 8pm					
Pack-up	* 7pm - ????					

* Critical need times

☐ I am a trained emotional support volunteer/professional.

☐ I will do anything! Anytime!

☐ I would like to help check in new panels.

☐ I have never volunteered for The NAMES Project.

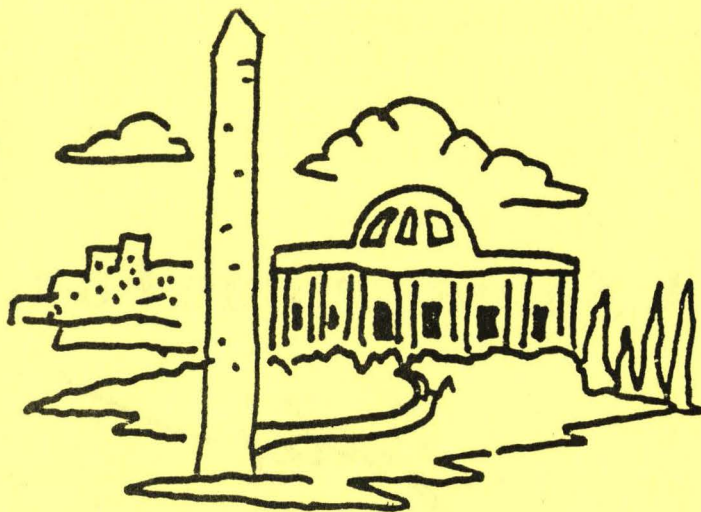
☐ I have never had "Rain folding" training.

Training information will follow with your shift confirmation.

Finally, repeat 200 times, "It will not rain, it will not rain, it will NOT rain!"



BUS TO D.C.



SPONSERED
BY

HARBOR MASTERS

LEAVING PORTLAND: Friday October 6th, 8 P.M

ARRIVING WASHINGTON: 8.A.M SATURDAY

LEAVING WASHINGTON: Sunday October 8th, 8 P.M

ARRIVING PORTLAND: Monday October 9th, 8.A.M

THIS IS FOR TRANSPORTATION ONLY. ACCOMADATIONS
MUST BE MADE BY INDIVIDUALS.

PRICE: \$55.00 ROUND TRIP

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT ANY HARBORMASTER MEMBER
Tom Lyons @ 774-2198

A Summertime Fundraising Experience

July

T	F	S	S
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AFTER DARK



14

FRIDAY
DRY DOCK
RED LIGHT REVUE

"after dark against AIDS"

SATURDAY

OLD PORT TAVERN

THE FLOATING BOATS

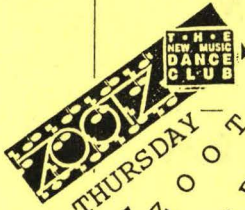
--an exciting series of evenings out
sponsored by Portland area
nightclubs to benefit The AIDS Project--

FRIDAY

21

HU SHANG
DANCE CLUB
EXCHANGE STREET

SHOW YOU CARE / PLAY SAFE / BE AWARE!



27

THURSDAY
ZOOZ
GIANT DANCE
PARTY

ENERGY MUSIC
and VIDEO

ALL PROCEEDS WILL REMAIN IN MAINE

AND

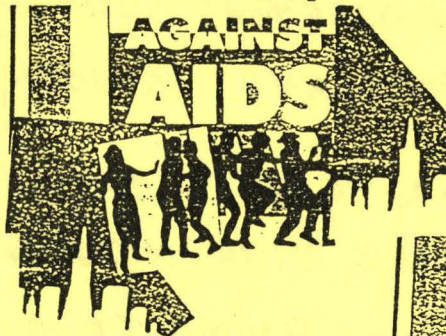
benefit The AIDS Project

FRIDAY
HIGH

28

THE
UNDERGROUND

AFTER DARK



You CAN make a
difference!

--Volunteer Information--

for more information or how you can help make a difference in the fight against AIDS-
call: (207) 774-6877 and ask for Jeannie Ross or Arne Hanson at extension 77.

The Test

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people may remain completely healthy for long periods of time, possibly even the rest of their lives. Other may develop ARC ("AIDS-related complex"), a condition with some AIDS symptoms but without any of the major infections usually associated with an AIDS diagnosis. Others may develop full-blown AIDS anywhere from three to more than ten years after infection.

Being HIV-positive **does not** mean that you are immune to the virus. Antibodies to HIV unlike most other antibodies, seem to provide no protection against the disease.

Being HIV-positive **does not** mean that you can no longer have sex. Just make sure that you always practice safer sex. For more information on safer sex call The AIDS Hotline at 1-800-851-AIDS (2437) or 775-1267 TTY-TTD.

In all cases of a positive test result, a second blood test will be performed to confirm the results of the first test. If the second test result is positive, a test called the Western Blot is performed for absolute* certainty. (Editors note: None of the antibody tests described here are 100% accurate.)

In a very small percentage of cases, people will test HIV-positive, even though they have not been infected with the virus. False positives may result from a mistake in the way the test was performed or from the presence of certain drugs, including birth control pills, in the person's body. A second test will usually show a negative result.

WHAT DOES HIV-NEGATIVE MEAN?

If you have not developed antibodies to the virus, you are HIV-negative. However, a negative test result does not guarantee that you are virus-free. Your body can take anywhere from six weeks to a year* after infection with the AIDS virus to produce antibodies. If you take the test after you have been infected with HIV, but before your body has had enough time to produce antibodies, you will test negative. A negative test result does not mean that you cannot transmit the virus to someone else. You need to be periodically retested in the following year, while continuing to practice safer sex. Intravenous drug users should never share needles, even if they are HIV-negative. (Editors note: new information suggests that some individuals may not seroconvert for periods of time longer than a year.)

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF TAKING THE TEST?

There are several reasons to consider taking the HIV antibody test.

If you suspect that you may have been infected with HIV, you should consider taking the test as a first step toward adopting a healthier lifestyle and taking control of your health. Several new therapies have shown promise in delaying the onset of AIDS in people who have been infected with HIV. These experimental treatments, which suppress the virus and strengthen the immune system, may be most effective at the early stages of the disease. Therefore, it is often best to begin these therapies as early as possible after HIV infection.

Knowing that you are HIV-positive also will, in most cases, reinforce positive changes in sexual behavior. This is important since repeated exposure to the virus seems to play a large role in the development of AIDS and ARC.

You should also consider taking the HIV antibody test if you are thinking about having a child and think that you or your partner may be infected. Confirming that you and your partner are HIV-negative before conceiving a child will reduce the chance of transmitting HIV to the child before or at birth.

ARE THERE DISADVANTAGES TO TAKING THE TEST?

It is normal for people to feel depressed, anxious and even suicidal when they find out that they are HIV-positive. People who have learned that they are HIV-positive may also feel afraid, helpless and worried about being shunned by their lovers, families, friends and co-workers.

To assist you in coping with your reactions to your test results, it is extremely important that you set up a support network of people you trust before you take the test.

Also, you should discuss your questions and fears about the HIV test and AIDS with a trained counselor both before and after you take the test. In New York State, all official anonymous HIV testing centers have counselors on staff. However, many hospitals and doctors fail to provide adequate counseling.

The purpose of pre-test counseling is to make sure that you understand what the test will and will not tell you, and whether you should take it. Pre-test counseling will help prepare you in case you test positive.

Post-test counseling will help you deal with any negative reactions. Eventually, with the help of friends and family, you will feel better. Then you can begin to take control of your health by improving your lifestyle and if appropriate, beginning preventive medicines.

Another possible disadvantage of taking the HIV antibody test is that you may be denied services or subjected to discrimination because you are HIV-positive. If insurance companies find out that you are HIV-positive, or even that you took the test, they may attempt to deny or take away your health or life insurance coverage. Some doctors, landlords, employers and schools have also discriminated against people who are HIV-positive even though this is illegal in Maine. If you believe you have been discriminated against, call the Maine Human Rights Commission at 289-2326.

If you do not have health insurance, try to obtain it before being tested. Many group insurance programs available at the workplace do not require medical screening. Once you have been granted medical coverage, it is very difficult for the insurance company to discontinue it because you test HIV-positive. However, your application for individual medical insurance coverage will probably be rejected if you have tested HIV-positive before applying.

HOW CAN I MAKE SURE THAT MY TEST RESULTS ARE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

The only way to make sure your test results will be kept confidential is to take the test anonymously. To make an appointment for one of the testing centers in Maine, or to get more information and anonymous counseling, call 1-800-851-AIDS (2437).

Many private doctors and public and private hospitals also administer the antibody test, but not anonymously.

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"ALL SINGING, ALL DANCING, ALL CONCERNED 89"

An exciting concert fundraiser to be presented at the Portland City Hall Auditorium, Friday October, 13 at 8:00 P.M. All tickets will go on sale beginning July 1.

This years performances will include new works in music, dance, video, and theatre. "All Singing, All Dancing, All Concerned" will be a celebration of life, love, and hope for all to share.

The AIDS Project is looking for volunteers to work in the following production areas:

Set Design	Costume Design
Lighting	Video Production
Sound	Press/Publicity
Ushering	Box Office
Sales	Program

For further information: Call Either Jeannie Ross or Arne Hanson at (207) 774-6877, ext. 77

Licensing Update

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vote 8 to 0 for recommending the drug's approval. The committee also called for extensive post-marketing studies, particularly research on whether the drug can be used concomitantly with AZT, and suggested further comparison studies between ganciclovir and foscarnet, another experimental drug for CMV retinitis. Full licensing of ganciclovir is expected this summer.

Erythropoietin: Another drug that is on the verge of being licensed has been mired in a legal battle. Erythropoietin (EPO) has been shown to stimulate production of red blood cells in anemic patients. Versions of the drug have been tested by three pharmaceutical companies: Ortho Pharmaceuticals, Amgen, Inc. and Chugai-Upjohn, a joint Japanese-American venture. Ortho and Amgen entered into an agreement by which Amgen would attempt to secure licensing to sell the drug, under the Orphan Drug Act, to patients with chronic kidney failure. When Amgen presented its data to

the FDA, Ortho insisted that its own data on the use of EPO in pre-dialysis patients be included. Amgen balked and a lawsuit ensued which eventually forced Amgen to submit to Ortho's data. In the meantime, Chugai-Upjohn has submitted data to the FDA for a license to sell drug to the same patient population. Ortho, presumably, is pursuing a license to sell EPO to other anemic patients, including PWAs. All that this maneuvering means for PWAs is that the financial interests of pharmaceutical companies are eclipsing the needs of patients. Fortunately, FDA has hinted that the drug is closed to licensing. EPO will first be licensed for kidney patients, but that will enable doctors to prescribe the drug for other indications such as AZT-induced anemia. For more detailed information on this promising drug, see *Treatment Issues*, Vol 3, No. 2.

Pentamidine

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At present the National Gay Rights Advocates are preparing to fight this battle on the national front, in the courts. This could take a long time. We have been advised that the fastest way to solve this problem is pressure on elected officials in Sacramento. The State Assembly could alter the language in existing insurance regulations, or write new legislation into the insurance code, which would force the insurance carriers to cover specifically-exempted treatments, such as aerosolized pentamidine, which they might otherwise decline to cover due to the FDA status as Investigational New Drugs. For this work to succeed, we need your help, fast. WE NEED INFORMATION.

In order to channel our efforts most effectively and influence the people in power on national-and particularly state-levels, we need to know about you. You need not give your name if you prefer. Just call or write us at 3909 17th Street, No. 3, San Francisco, CA 94114, (415) 553-4041. Tell us of your situation; the name of your carrier, when they denied benefits to you, etc. Your quick action could save a life: your own. Please contact us today. Thanks.



PWA Coalition of Maine

The search is on for PWA's interested in writing for and/or working with *The PWA Coalition Newslines*. If you have a story to tell, would like to write about your experiences with AIDS or just life in general, we would like to hear from you. If you would like to help put the *Newslines* together (cut and paste, edit, layout, distribution, etc.) we want to hear from you.

Please contact The PWA Coalition by mail at 377 Cumberland Avenue, Portland, ME 04101 - Attention: June Seamans or call 773-8500.

Maine law requires that you sign a form indicating that you understand the test and agree to be tested. Your test results will probably be permanently recorded on your medical chart. While these test results are supposed to be kept confidential, there have been instances in which a patient's HIV status has been disclosed to insurance companies and others without his or her consent or knowledge.

If you suspect that you might be HIV-positive, you should not donate blood. The Red Cross will test your blood and if it finds that you are HIV-positive, your name will be placed on a "blind" donor deferral list, which does not disclose the reason for the deferral and which is shared only among blood banks.

As a general rule, to protect yourself against possible discrimination, you should be cautious about disclosing that you took the test and your test results to anyone other than trusted friends and family, sexual partners and health care professionals. Maine Law now protects confidentiality in most circumstances. If you feel that your confidentiality has been violated, call the Maine Human Rights Commission at 289-2326.

SHOULD I TAKE THE TEST SO THAT I CAN STOP PRACTICING SAFER SEX?

Some people will use the HIV test as a basis for making decisions about their sexual relationships. Some people will not begin a sexual relationship unless their partner has tested HIV-negative. If someone has asked you to take the test, you should do so only after carefully weighing the possible advantages and disadvantages.

Couples who have decided to remain monogamous (to have sex only with each other) sometimes want to be tested to know if it is safe for them to have unprotected sex. If you and your partner want to use the test for this purpose, you must both remain absolutely monogamous, and continue to practice safer sex for at least a year before taking the test. This will insure accuracy*.

If you are both HIV-negative, and stop practicing safer sex, you and your partner must continue to be absolutely monogamous. Unprotected sex with even one person may expose you and your partner to HIV infection. To avoid this risk, it is safest simply to continue practicing safer sex, even if you think that you are in a monogamous relationship. *(Editors note: again, there is no absolute "insurance" of accuracy in HIV-antibody testing.)

UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES MAY I BE REQUIRED TO TAKE THE TEST?

Unfortunately, some forms of HIV-antibody testing are mandatory. Insurance companies may require applicants for life and health insurance to take the HIV antibody test.

The armed services, Job Corps, foreign service and Peace Corps routinely subject new recruits to the test, and federal prisons also test all inmates. Person applying for permanent resident status (green card) will be required to take the test.

In all cases, persons who are found to be HIV-positive may be excluded from insurance coverage, employment or permanent residence.

WHO SHOULD I TELL IF I AM HIV-POSITIVE?

You should tell your doctor that you are HIV-positive so that he or she can monitor your health and not prescribe drugs that will harm your immune system.

You should tell anyone who may be exposed to your blood, semen or vaginal fluid, including present and past sexual partners or needle sharing partners. If you do not inform these partners yourself, Maine State law allows a public health worker to inform them that they might be at risk for HIV infection. However, it is illegal for you to be identified by name as a possible source of infection.

Finally, to prevent feelings of isolation, it is important to tell one or more trusted friends or relative that you are HIV-positive. If you do not feel comfortable discussing this with anyone you know, you should discuss it with a counselor. There is a group service for people who have tested HIV-positive at The AIDS Project in Portland. Call 1-800-851-AIDS (2437) for more information.

HOW CAN I MAKE SURE THAT I WILL NOT TRANSMIT THE VIRUS TO OTHERS?

To prevent transmitting HIV, you should not allow your blood, semen, or vaginal fluid to enter another person's body. This means that you should practice safer sex every time you have sex. Practicing safer sex is also important for your health, because repeated exposure to HIV may further damage your immune system. Also, using a condom will protect you from other sexually transmitted diseases, such as syphilis and gonorrhea, which suppress the immune system. To find out more about how to practice safer sex, call The AIDS Project Hotline at 1-800-851-AIDS (2437), or City of Portland's Public Health Division at 874-8446.

You should not expose others to anything that has come in contact with your blood or other bodily fluids, such as a syringe, razor or toothbrush.

Do not donate blood, semen, organs, or tissue. If you are a woman who is HIV-positive, you should not become pregnant, because the virus can be passed from a mother to her fetus during pregnancy, birth or breastfeeding. Always practice safer sex, especially during menstruation.

If you happen to spill blood on any surface, clean it with a solution of one part household bleach and nine parts water. But don't panic: it is very difficult to transmit HIV in this manner.

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

If you are HIV-positive you should exercise, eat a well-balanced, nutritious diet, avoid stress and get enough sleep. Avoid cigarettes, alcohol and recreational drugs, because they reduce the body's ability to fight off infections.

Get regular medical checkups by a doctor who is knowledgeable about AIDS, and talk to him or her about beginning one of the medicines that have shown promise in preventing or delaying the onset of AIDS-related infections in HIV-positive people. Text by Paula Berg

Special Editor's Note: There are points of interest that have been duly noted and brought up to date from the original article. Said information has come to light currently from the New England Journal of Medicine

Ongoing Calendar of Meetings

MONDAY

AIDS Response of the Seacoast in Portsmouth, NH, runs a support group for PWA's and PWARC's and HIV+'s. The group is open to people from York County. A holistic healing model is used incorporating meditation, visualization, heart centering, music and touch in a supportive and loving environment. For more information and an intake interview, contact Suzanne Bowman at (207) 439-2136 or Peter Welch at (603) 436-5115.

Waterville Support Group for PWA's, PWARC's and HIV+'s and their families, friends and caregivers. Meets from 6:30-8:00 P.M. at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Waterville. For more information call Dan Gardiner at 873-3904.

Support Group for PWA's, families, friends and significant others, every other Monday at Miles Conference Center, Damariscotta, 6:00-7:00 P.M. Contact Kandy Powell at 563-1709. Sponsored by AIDS Coalition for Lincoln County.

A Support Group for persons with AIDS, ARC and HIV infection meets in Auburn at the First Universalist Church. Meetings are the 2nd and 4th Monday from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. in the Church Library. Call Tim Sutter (626-3435) or Cecilia Leland (289-5060) for more information.

Belfast Area AIDS Support in Waldo County. For PWA's, PWARC's, HIV+'s, friends, family and caregivers. Call 338-3736 (Family Planning) Mon-Thurs 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. or Alan 548-2929 evenings/weekends for information.

TUESDAY

Morning Support for PWA's, PWARC's, HIV+'s, their families, friends, and caregivers meets from 10:30-12:00 Noon. Location: The AIDS Project, 22 Monument Square, 5th Floor, Portland. Call 774-6877 or 1-800-851-2437 for more details.

Evening Support Group for lovers, friends, caregivers and family members only. Meets from 7:00-8:30 P.M. at 29

Cushman Street, Portland. Call Brooke Alexander at 772-1678 for details.

Merrymeeting AIDS Support Services (MASS) A support Group for families, partners & friends of persons with AIDS and HIV disease. Meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00-8:30 P.M. at Parkview Hospital Library in Brunswick. Contact Cecilia Leland at 725-4955 for more information.

ACT-UP Boston meets every week at 7:30 P.M. Call (617) 49ACTUP (492-2887) for more information. ACT-UP: AIDS COALITION TO UNLEASH POWER -- United in anger and committed to direct action to end the AIDS crisis.

AIDS-Line Staff Meeting at 6:00 P.M. the first Tuesday of each month. Location: The AIDS Project, 22 Monument Square, 5th Floor, Portland.

Downeast AIDS Network (DEAN) holds a support group for people affected by AIDS every Tuesday evening at 7:00 P.M. in Ellsworth. Call 326-8580 for the location.

AIDS Education & Support Group for Knox County, P.O. Box 1613, Rockland, Maine 04841. Public meeting are held at 7:00 P.M. on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the University of Maine Augusta Thomaston Center. For more information call 354-6906 or 596-6979 or write.

Support Group for Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at the Pilgrim House, 9 Cleveland Street, Brunswick. Call 729-9843 for more information.

WEDNESDAY

Positively Sober Group, AA-AIDS-related meeting from 6:00-7:00 P.M. at The AIDS Project, 22 Monument Square, 5th Floor, Portland. Meeting is open to all PWA's, PWARC's and HIV+'s in recovery from substance abuse.

THURSDAY

Women's AIDS, ARC & HIV+ sup-

port group. The group meets 10:30-12:00 at The AIDS Project, 22 Monument Square, 5th Floor, Portland. Facilitated by Diane Elze and Jan Carter. This group is for Women with AIDS, ARC or HIV+ only. Call 774-6877 or 1-800-851-2437 for more information.

Lewiston Area Support Group for PWA's, lovers, friends and family members meets in the afternoon at Clover House in Auburn. Call Evelyn Piper-Keene at 783-9095 for more information.

Bangor Area AIDS Support Group meets every Thursday evening. Contact the Eastern Maine AIDS Network (EMAN) at P.O. Box 2038, Bangor, ME 04401, or call 990-3626

HIV+ Support Group meets from 5:30-7:00 P.M. at The AIDS Project, 22 Monument Square, 5th Floor, Portland. This is an open group, no advance contact is needed. Call 774-6877 or 1-800-851-2437.

A Healing Circle for People affected by AIDS is held the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month in Hancock County. Sponsored by the Downeast AIDS Network (DEAN). For information and directions, call 326-8580.

FRIDAY

PWA/PWARC Support Group meets every Friday from 6:00-7:30 P.M. at The AIDS Project, 22 Monument Square, 5th Floor, Portland. Drop-in group. This is for people with AIDS and ARC only. Call 774-6877 or 1-800-851-2437.

Support Group for persons with AIDS, ARC and HIV+, and their family members, friends and caregivers. The group meets every Friday, 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Portsmouth Hospital, Classroom I & II.

OTHER

AIDS Coalition of Lincoln County is a group focusing on AIDS education in Maine. We welcome PWA's, PWARC's, HIV+'s and their lovers, friends and

family members, as well as all concerned people to our meetings. For time and place, call Barbara Brampton at 563-3032.

Lunch at the Lounge-Tuesday & Thursday 12:00 to 1:30. Tuesday - Vegetarian, Thursday - Traditional Fare. **Open to all PWA's, PWARC's**

Merrymeeting AIDS Support Services is now accepting application for Buddy Training to be held in September 1989. For more information call or write MASS at P.O. Box 77, Brunswick, ME 04011, 725-4955.

Out-of-State Services/Hot-lines

NH-AIDS Info Line:
(603) 224-3341
(800) 752-AIDS (24 hr. Hotline)

VT- AIDS Info Line:
(802) 254-4444
(800) 882-2437 (VT Only)

Mass.-AIDS Info Line:
(617) 536-7733
(800) 235-2331 (MA Only)

Comemorative Poster For Sale

The Names Project Quilt Comemorative Poster of the "Quilted Heart" is currently available at a special price of \$20.00. It is heavy weight and suitable for framing.

Available at:

The AIDS Project
22 Monument Square, 5th Floor
Portland, Maine 04101
774-6877

Greenhut Galleries
146 Middle Street
Portland, Maine 04101
772-2693

Graphiti
547A Congress Street
Portland, Maine 04101
774-7599

The AIDS Project Wish List

If you can help us with these items, please call us at:

774-6877

Air Conditioners
Bookcases (for offices and reception area)
Coat Rack
Records
Books
Games
Cassette Recorder
Paper Cutter

6 Burner Electric Stove
Industrial Dishwasher
IBM Compatible Wordprocessing System with Printer
Typewriters
Photocopier
Telephone System
Pots and Pans

Ways You Can Help Us Help Others

A General Donation

The AIDS Project relies on the support of its friends to provide services and to provide educational programs. Contributions to support our programs are welcome.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Donation ☐ \$15 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$100 other \$ _____

A Memorial Contribution

To express condolences for the loss of loved ones, many friends choose to make a memorial gift to The AIDS Project. A letter will be sent to notify a surviving loved one or friend of your gift.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Donation \$ _____ In Memory Of: _____

SUBSCRIBE

This Newsletter relies on subscriptions to exist. We are grateful to those who have subscribed, and to those who have not, please do so now. Rates: Individuals \$10/Low Income \$5/Institutions \$30/PWA's Free. Please make your check payable to: The AIDS Project, 22 Monument Square, Fifth Floor Portland, Me 04101. Thank You.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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