HIV-1 is likely transferred to humans from a subspecies of chimpanzees infected with simian immunodeficiency virus (SIV) sometime before 1955.

We do not know how many people developed AIDS in the 1970s, or indeed in the years before. Neither do we know, and we probably never will know, where the AIDS virus HIV originated.

But what we do know is:

The earliest case of HIV confirmed. HIV-1 was found in blood samples of an African man who died in 1959.
At the 1980 Democratic National Convention, openly gay delegate Mel Boozier takes the podium as a nominee for vice president in order to get the party's attention to gay issues. The Democratic platform, unlike those in later years, backs gay rights.

October: Maryland Rep. Robert Bauman is arrested for sex with a 16-year-old male prostitute. The Republican lost his seat in November. He blames his downfall on his 'twins compulsion' of alcoholism and homosexuality; gays blame it on his hypocrisy.

A US district court judge orders the Army to reinstate Sergeant Leonard Matlovich, but instead, he accepts $160,000 from the Army to stay out. Gay activists criticize him for selling out.

Because there was no approved test for HIV in the early 1980's, cases were confirmed using clinical criteria based on a crude CDC case definition.

December: the first case of Pneumocystis Pneumonia (PCP), a form of pneumonia later associated with AIDS, is reported.
GRIDS is found to affect drug users as well as homosexuals.

On July 4th, the CDC reports that during the past 30-months, 26 cases of Kaposi Sarcoma have been reported among gay males, and that eight have died, all within 24-months of diagnosis.

Mysterious immune system disorder in five homosexual men in Los Angeles.

The first cases of Gay Related Immune Deficiency Syndrome (GRIDS) are reported in the UK.

In the US:
- Newly infected persons: 310 total
- AIDS-related deaths: 247 total

1981

Kaposi's Sarcoma-Associated Herpesvirus (KSHV)
- Envelope layer
- Capsid layer
- Genome layer
- Nuclear layer
Gay Men's Health Crisis founded in NYC by playwright Larry Kramer and others

The Centers for Disease Control confirms a link between AIDS and blood.

1982

First incidence of homosexual contracting and dying from pneumocystis carinii pneumonia (PCP), an illness associated with the AIDS virus.

The disease is first referred to by its new name: AIDS
Doctors in France report that they have isolated the virus that causes AIDS

The first meeting of the World Health Organization is held to discuss global AIDS surveillance

Scientists still do not know how AIDS is transmitted

September: People in the UK who might be particularly susceptible to AIDS are asked not to donate blood.
1984

Margaret Heckler announces that the National Cancer Institute has isolated the virus that causes AIDS.

AIDS is identified as being caused by the human retrovirus, HIV.

The New York Times reports that "In the New England Journal of Medicine in all African AIDS cases, a team of Belgian doctors wrote: "We are struck by the shocking number of patients who have come from Côte d'Ivoire or Rwanda during the past four years to seek medical care. We believe that AIDS is a new disease that is spreading in central Africa."

New evidence is reported that AIDS can be spread heterosexually and transmitted even before a person shows outward signs of the disease.
President Reagan publicly mentions AIDS for the first time

The FDA licenses the first AIDS blood test for commercial production

More than 2000 people attended the first international AIDS conference held in Atlanta, Georgia

19,232 HAVE DIED SINCE 1980

The first transmission of the virus from mother to child through breastfeeding is reported

Larry Kramer's *The Normal Heart* opens at the Public Theatre in NYC. This play was one of the first important plays about AIDS—not only looking at the way the nightmarish disease affected lives but also at the way government, the media, the public at large and the gay community in particular fed the plague by consistently refusing to deal with it. The sad fact is, this sort of “head in the sand” approach is still with us today.
In England, the first specialist AIDS hospital ward was opened by Princess Diana. The fact that she did not wear gloves when shaking hands with people with AIDS was widely reported in the press.

A Leflet about AIDS was delivered to every household in the UK, and the British Government also launched a major advertising campaign with the slogan "AIDS: DON'T DIE OF IGNORANCE."
November: The first official syringe exchange is started in the US to prevent AIDS transmission through drug use.

I HAVE AIDS
Please hug me
I can't make you SICK

The United States bans discrimination against federal workers diagnosed with HIV.

IN THE US:
NEWLY INFECTED
PERSONS
31,728
TOTAL

AIDS-RELATED
DEATHS
18,101
TOTAL

1988

The International AIDS Society is founded as a non-profit organization in connection with the fourth International AIDS Conference in Stockholm.

December: The first World AIDS Day took place, with WHO asking everyone to "Join the Worldwide Effort."

Diver Greg Louganis competes in the Olympic Games. Six years later he would go on to publicly announce that he is homosexual and that he has AIDS, something he has known since early 1988 when he competed.
October: The second drug for the treatment of AIDS, dideoxyinosine (ddl), starts to be made available to people with AIDS.

Hans Verhoef, a Dutch man with AIDS, was jailed in Minnesota under the federal law banning travelers with HIV from entering the USA.

1983

The fifth annual International AIDS conference, titled "The Scientific and Social Challenge of AIDS," is held in Montreal.

In the US:
Newly infected persons: 35,238
Total: 35,238
AIDS-related deaths: 24,349
Total: 24,349
May: Angels In America: Millenium Approaches is first performed in a workshop production presented by Center Theatre Group/Mark Taper Forum.

Ronald Reagan apologizes for his neglect of the epidemic while he was president.

1990

1,000,000 people are newly-infected with AIDS worldwide.

Elton John and Michael Jackson bring worldwide attention to Ryan White.

The Sixth international AIDS Conference is held in San Francisco "AIDS in the Nineties: From Science to Policy."

June: TV programme 'The AIDS Catch' screens in the UK. It questions HIV as the cause of AIDS and whether AIDS is infectious or not.
Earvin “Magic” Johnson announces that he is HIV positive and that he is retiring from the NBA as a result, based on the advice of his doctors.

In the UK, Freddie Mercury confirmed he had AIDS. The day after the announcement, he died.

The Red Ribbon became the international symbol of AIDS awareness.
Tennis star Arthur Ashe announces that he has been infected with HIV as a result of a blood transfusion in 1983.
February: Arthur Ashe dies less than a year after announcing he had been infected with HIV.

May: The FDA approves the Reality Female Condom.

1993

AIDS Day: The AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power holds a demonstration, also known as the "giant condom" demonstration, at the Embassy of Place Condome in Washington, DC. This event brought attention to the need for universal access to condoms in response to the worldwide AIDS epidemic.

At the beginning of the year, the CDC expanded its definition of AIDS to include additional opportunistic infections, as well as HIV-infected adults with a CD4 count of less than 200. The expert panel of the European Centre for the Epidemiological Monitoring of AIDS, joined by the WHO's Regional Office for Europe, accepted the basis of the additional diagnostic criteria but not the CD4 cell count criteria.
November: 22 year old Pedro Zamora dies of AIDS. Pedro became famous as a cast member on the MTV reality show “The Real World”.

February: Randy Shilts, Gay activist and author of “And The Band Played On” dies.

March: Tom Hanks wins an Oscar for playing a gay man with AIDS in the film Philadelphia.

November: FDA approves polyurethane condom for those allergic to latex.

1994

A study finds that starting antiretroviral therapy at the time of cesarean delivery combined with taking ART reduces the risk of HIV transmission to the baby to less than 1%. The study also finds that women who take ART but deliver their infants by natural childbirth have a higher risk of transmitting HIV to their babies.

During the summer, the AIDS Prevention Agency in Brussels, in collaboration with the European Union, launched a campaign whose central image was the flying condom. This was intended to serve as a visual reminder to young travelers of the risks of HIV infection. The logo was displayed in airports, railway stations, popular holiday destinations and other places young people visited during the summer.

France, on 9th April, all the television networks, public service and private, broadcast “All against AIDS”, a national 4-hour AIDS program. All of France, in their homes, stood with their TV on, and watched as their favorite programs were interrupted to raise money.

European AIDS awareness week.

Over 33 million francs was raised.

On 15 days, in France, AIDS was the most severe public-health problem.
AIDS is named as the leading cause of death amongst all Americans aged 25-44.

The FDA approves the first of a potent new family of anti-AIDS drugs. The drug saquinavir, belongs to a class of drugs called protease inhibitors. The drug was approved in record time, and was said to be "some of the most hopeful news in years for people living with AIDS."

1995

December: At the World AIDS Day Nelson Mandela urges South Africans to "speak out against the stigma, blame, shame and denial that has thus far been associated with [the AIDS] epidemic."

The WHO's Global program on AIDS closed as planned on 31st December 1995. They estimated that the end of the century, 30 to 40 million people will have been affected by HIV.

"I want a cure and I want my friends back."

March: The Seventh International Conference for People Living with HIV/AIDS is held in Cape Town, South Africa, the first time that the annual conference was held in Africa.

2,200,000 people are newly-infected with AIDS worldwide.
In the US:
- Newly infected persons: 68,808
- AIDS-related deaths: 38,296

In Washington, D.C., the AIDS Memorial Quilt was displayed in its entirety for the last time. It was also the first time that a display of this quilt had been visited by an American president.

February: Heavyweight boxer Tommy Morrison is identified as HIV positive after being tested prior to a fight.

FDA approves first HIV test system that can be used at home.

The new Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS), bringing together six agencies belonging to or affiliated with the UN system—WHO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNESCO and the World Bank—became operational.

In China it is estimated that the number of AIDS cases is as high as 100,000. Two-thirds of the reported AIDS cases are occurring in the southern province of Yunnan, where the use of heroine and sharing needles is prevalent.

Together, for a safer world.
1 in 100 adults worldwide of the 15-49 age group are thought to be infected with HIV. Only 1 in 10 infected people are aware of their infection.
1998

In the US:
- Newly infected persons: 48,266
- AIDS-related deaths: 18,823

- In April, President Bill Clinton announced that the US would be providing funds for the PEPFAR program.

26 June: The company AIDSVax started the first human trial of an AIDS vaccine using a recombinant vector against HIV.

"It opened a new era in AIDS research, and led us to think how the human body works. It was like being in a room that was perfectly lit, and suddenly the light went out and you could see the pathway onto it."

- Jonathan Mann, the first director of the global program on AIDS, died in the crash of a plane in flips.

- In South Africa, Gugu Diamini, an AIDS activist, was beaten to death by her neighbors, who claimed she was spreading HIV.

- The 1998 World AIDS Campaign "Young People: Force for Change" was prompted in part by the epidemic's threat to those under 25 years old, as HIV rates rose in the general population. New infections were increasingly concentrated in younger age groups.

- Thabo Mbeki called for people to "break the silence about AIDS" in order to defeat the epidemic.

"It is a terrible day. We have to reach people who have HIV with care and support, and not as if they have an illness that is evil."

- Thabo Mbeki

A French court orders the former French prime minister, Laurent Fabius, to stand trial on charges of voluntary homicide for allowing HIV-contaminated blood to be used in transfusions.

GlaxoWellcome

GlaxoWellcome cut the price of AZT by 75% after a trial in Thailand showed the effectiveness and safety in preventing mother-to-child transmission in developing countries. However, even with this price cut, it was expected that the drug would still be too expensive for use in many developing countries.

...""tured a new era in AIDS research, and led us to think how the human body works. It was like being in a room that was perfectly lit, and suddenly the light went out and you could see the pathway onto it.""...
JANUARY: In order to publicize the importance of HIV testing to African-Americans, Reverend Jesse Jackson publicly took an oral HIV test.

The Clinton Administration formally declares HIV/AIDS as a threat to U.S. national security. The United States believes that the global spread of AIDS is reaching catastrophic dimensions that could topple foreign governments, spark ethnic wars and undo decades of work building free-market democracies abroad. This is the first time the National Security Council becomes involved in fighting an infectious disease.

FEBRUARY: Trials begin for Bulgarian health workers who have been charged in Libya with deliberately infecting children with HIV. The Bulgarian doctors, five nurses and anesthetists, were detained in 1998 after almost 400 children were given infected blood at a hospital in Benghazi, Libya's second largest city. Eight Libyans and a Palestinian were also charged.
President George W. Bush appointed an openly gay man, Scott Evans, as Director of the Office of National AIDS Policy, but did not find any extra money in his 2002 budget for AIDS prevention or treatment.

The American Association for Retarded Children produced a poster with Ronald Reagan and the title, "I Care... Do You?"

2001

AIDS
We Care. Do You?
Treasure your family. Keep AIDS away.

APRIL: Kofi Annan calls for spending on AIDS to be increased 10-fold in developing countries. In the Annual Report on Aids, he suggests a 'war chest' of $7-10 billion to be spent annually on a global campaign against AIDS. A massive increase on the $3 billion a year currently being spent.

James is alive. Cathy is not. This is for the memory.

Stan Schobert
We miss you, Angel.
2002

For the first time, women account for about half of all HIV-infected adults.

In the US:

26,464 newly infected
16,371 AIDS-related deaths
20,148 total
FOR THE FIRST TIME, IT IS REPORTED THAT WOMEN ACCOUNT FOR ABOUT HALF OF ALL HIV-INFECTED ADULTS.

Study shows that approximately 50% of Americans will believe that they could acquire HIV through everyday contact and suggested the mandatory testing of groups most at risk of HIV infection.

Swiss researchers reported the first fully documented case of HIV-positive man who was additionally infected with a second strain of HIV through unprotected sex more than two years after he was first infected.

Kami, a fluffy, mustard-coloured, HIV-positive character joins the cast of the South African version of Sesame Street. Kami's name is derived from the Tswana word meaning acceptance.
Jerry Thacker, a controversial Christian extremist chosen by the White House to sit on a presidential AIDS advisory panel and who once described the virus as the ‘gay plague’ was forced to withdraw his name after protests from gay rights groups.

Health secretary Tommy Thompson is elected as the new chairman of the Global Fund for HIV, TB and Malaria. It is hoped that his appointment will smooth relations between the Bush administration and the international health community.

UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan uses World AIDS Day as a platform to speak out against HIV-related stigma and discrimination. He says “The impact of stigma can be as detrimental as the virus itself” and he urges people to replace ‘fear with hope, silence with solidarity’. He goes on to say that ‘the fear of stigma leads to silence and when it comes to fighting AIDS, silence is death’.

Swariland is believed to have the world’s highest rate of HIV infection: almost 40% of adults live with the virus.

UNAIDS warns that efforts to stem the world’s AIDS epidemic are ‘entirely inadequate’. They estimate that 14,000 people are infected with HIV every day in 2003 and an estimated 40 million around the world including 2.5 million children live with HIV/AIDS.
AIDS HAS BECOME A GLOBAL CATASTROPHE.

About 40,000 new diagnoses of AIDS annually (down from 80,000 in mid-90s but beginning to increase).

MAY: Five Bulgarian nurses and a Palestinian doctor accused of deliberately infecting children with HIV were sentenced to death by a Libyan court. (The medical staff were detained in 1998 and the trial started in 2000.)

INFECTION RATES APPROACH 20% OF NATIONAL POPULATIONS IN SOME AFRICAN COUNTRIES. TENS OF MILLIONS INFECTED.

Drug routines developed that stabilize an individual—very expensive—Some people unable to tolerate the toxins—don’t work for everyone.

APRIL: Chinese Government announces that it will start offering everyone free HIV tests.

2004

AIDS IS NOW THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN AGED 25–34.