

Glossary

(Found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/resources/reports/hiv3rddecade/chapter6.htm>)

adherence to therapy—Taking medications as prescribed.

AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome)—A specific group of diseases or conditions that indicate severe suppression of the immune system related to infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

AIDS case definition—A standard definition of the physical and laboratory findings that make up an AIDS case. In 1993, the AIDS case definition was expanded to include a broader range of diseases and conditions and the results of immunologic testing, such as CD4+ T-cell counts. Consequently, the number of AIDS cases in 1993 was transiently elevated by the rapid reporting of cases not previously reported using the old definition.

antibody—An infection-fighting protein molecule in blood that attaches to and neutralizes viruses.

clinical trials—Studies conducted among volunteer participants; clinical trials test the safety and efficacy of new drugs. *Controlled* means that some participants actually receive the drug being tested while others receive placebo (an inactive substance). *Randomized* means that assignment to a group is random. *Double-blind* means that neither participants nor researchers know until after the study is completed who was assigned to which group; that is, who received the drug being tested and who received placebo.

All new vaccines must pass 3 phases of clinical trials before they can be considered for regulatory licensure.

Phase I—Tests for safety and dosage.

Phase II—Larger scale tests for safety.

Phase III—Large-scale studies for efficacy. For HIV vaccines, these tests must be performed in thousands of individuals who are HIV-negative but at high risk for HIV.

efficacy—Effectiveness of a drug or product under ideal (experimental) conditions, as opposed to under average (real-world) conditions.

epidemic—The occurrence in a community or region of cases of an illness, specific health-related behavior, or other health-related events clearly in excess of normal expectancy.

HAART (highly active antiretroviral therapy)—HIV treatment regimens, consisting of combinations of drugs that have been shown to reduce the amount of HIV virus in a patient's blood.

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus)—The virus that causes AIDS. Not all people infected with HIV have AIDS, but all people with AIDS are infected with HIV.

HIV counseling, testing, and referral

counseling—An HIV-prevention intervention. The counseling approach used is critical to the success of HIV prevention efforts. A client-centered HIV prevention counseling model has been shown to be especially effective. This model focuses on helping clients identify HIV risk behaviors and commit to personalized steps to reduce their HIV-related risks.

testing—Laboratory determination of HIV status. Voluntary testing can be obtained in medical care settings such as doctors' offices, hospitals, managed care organizations, and public health clinics or can be performed using home-collection kits. HIV testing may be required as part of screening programs for military personnel, blood donors, correctional facility inmates, and insurance applicants.

anonymous testing—People who choose anonymous HIV testing are not required to provide their names; therefore, test results are not linked to any records with an identifying name (including the request for tests or test results).

confidential testing—People who choose confidential testing provide their names, and testing information is documented in their record.

referral—The process by which immediate client needs for medical, prevention, and social support services are assessed, prioritized, and addressed (in the context of HIV prevention counseling and testing).

incidence—The number of new events, such as HIV infections, over time (usually a year).

intervention—An action intended to modify an outcome. Examples of HIV prevention interventions include counseling, educational messages, and discussion groups intended to help reduce HIV transmission.

outreach—Extending services to a wider section of the population than are currently receiving the services.

preclinical trials—Laboratory and animal studies designed to test the mechanisms, safety, and efficacy of a drug or medical device before, if ever, testing it in people.

prevalence—The number of people affected by a condition, such as HIV infection, at a given point in time.

surveillance—An ongoing, systematic process of collecting, analyzing, interpreting, disseminating, and evaluating data. Surveillance data are used to track disease and provide information for action to protect the public health.

AIDS surveillance—AIDS diagnoses are reported to CDC from all US states and territories.

HIV surveillance—All states have some form of HIV infection reporting. As of January 2005, 42 states and territories have confidential, name-based HIV reporting systems and forward this information to CDC. However, it is not possible to examine trends in HIV diagnoses in all 42 states because many have just recently begun HIV reporting. Therefore, most of the HIV trends reported in this document come from data from 25 states that have required HIV reporting since 1993 (longstanding HIV reporting).

vaccine—A preparation that stimulates the body's immune system to protect itself from an invading virus.

virus—A microorganism made of either DNA or RNA with a protein coat. Viruses invade healthy cells and then use those host cells to replicate, spreading disease or infection. HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, is particularly dangerous because it attacks the body's immune system cells.

zidovudine—One of the drugs used to treat AIDS. May be abbreviated as ZDV or AZT.