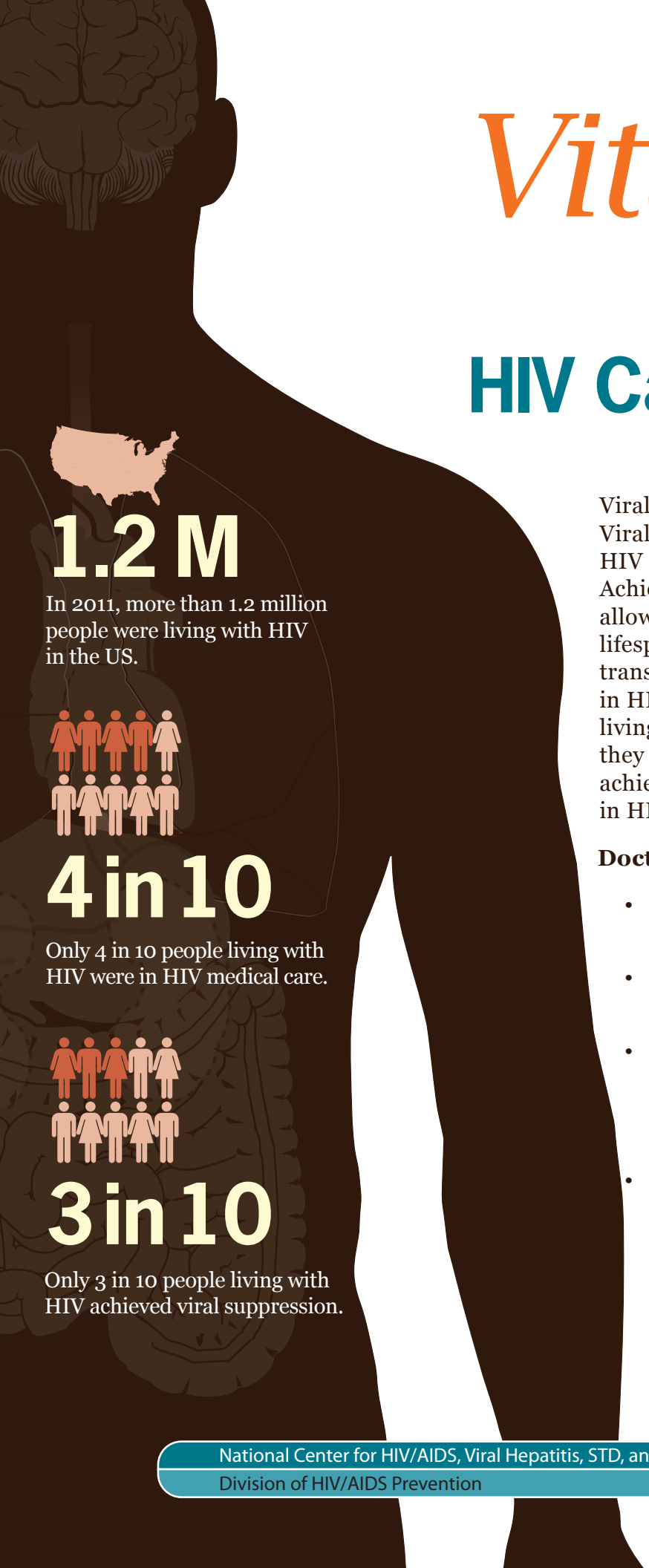
CDC Vitalsigns™
November 2014

HIV Care Saves Lives

Viral Suppression is Key



1.2 M

In 2011, more than 1.2 million people were living with HIV in the US.

4 in 10

Only 4 in 10 people living with HIV were in HIV medical care.

3 in 10

Only 3 in 10 people living with HIV achieved viral suppression.

Viral suppression is key for people living with HIV. Viral suppression means having very low levels of HIV in the body, even though the virus is still there. Achieving viral suppression by taking HIV medicines allows people living with HIV to have nearly normal lifespans and greatly reduces their chances of transmitting the virus. While we have made progress in HIV prevention and care, only 30% of all people living with HIV have achieved viral suppression. If they are in HIV medical care, however, 76% of people achieve viral suppression. Getting and keeping people in HIV medical care saves lives.

Doctors, nurses, and health care systems can:

- Test patients for HIV as a regular part of medical care.
- Counsel patients who do not have HIV on how to prevent it.
- Make sure people living with HIV are prescribed and take HIV medicines, stay in care and get supportive services such as nutrition, housing, or mental health services.
- Work with health departments to get and keep people in HIV medical care.

→ **See page 4**

Want to learn more? Visit

www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns

National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention
Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention

Problem

Not enough people living with HIV have achieved viral suppression.

Viral suppression is the goal of HIV medical care. There are four key steps:

Step 1: HIV testing and diagnosis.

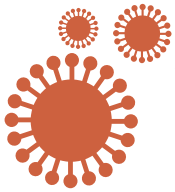
- About 14% of people living with HIV have never been diagnosed.
- Everyone needs to be tested to find out if they have HIV so they can start getting the medical care needed for viral suppression and reduce their risk of transmitting the virus to others.

Step 2: Getting and keeping people living with HIV in medical care.

- Only 40% of people living with HIV have received regular HIV medical care.
- Once in medical care, people can get HIV medicines and prevention services to help them stay healthy and protect their partners.
- Doctors, nurses, and other health care providers can use strategies, such as appointment reminders, to help patients stay in care.

Step 3: Prescribing HIV medicines.

- Only 37% of people living with HIV are prescribed HIV medicines. Too many have not been diagnosed or are not in HIV medical care.
- However, of patients in HIV medical care, 92% are prescribed HIV medicines.
- Doctors, nurses, and other health care providers should prescribe HIV medicines to everyone with HIV to lower the amount of virus in the body.

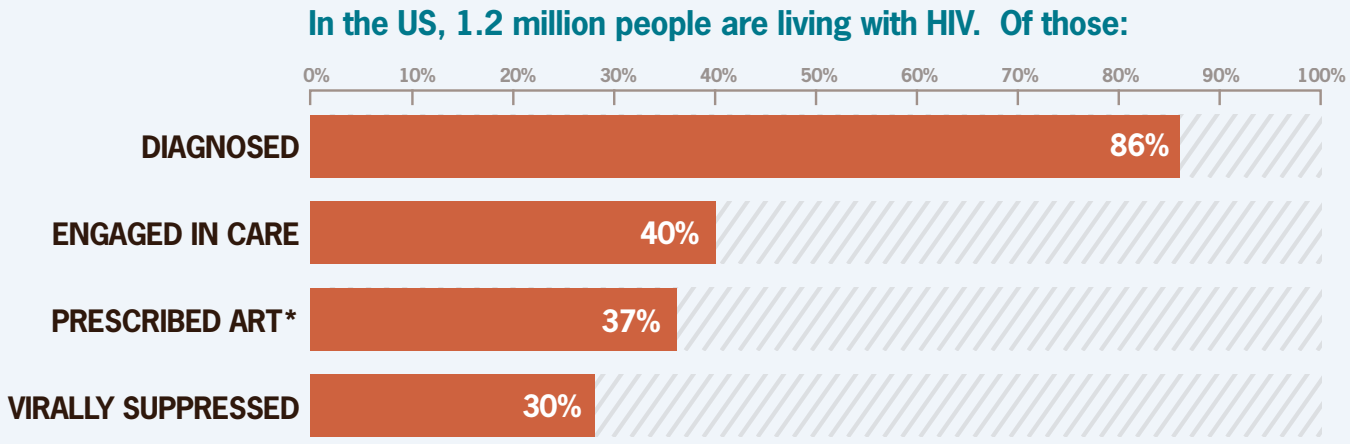


Step 4: Helping patients achieve viral suppression.

- Only 30% of all people living with HIV have achieved viral suppression. Too many have not been diagnosed, are not in medical care, or are not taking HIV medicines.
- However, of patients in HIV medical care, 76% achieve viral suppression.
- Doctors, nurses, and other health care providers play an important role in helping their patients start and stay on HIV medicines.

SOURCES: CDC National HIV Surveillance System and Medical Monitoring Project, 2011.

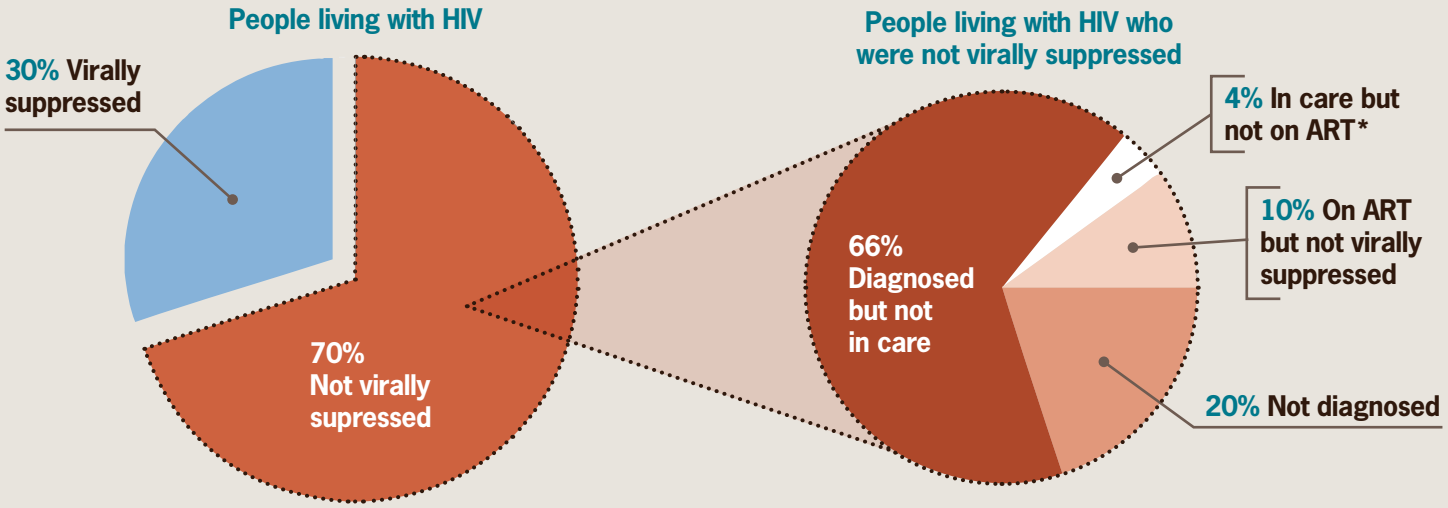
HIV Care Continuum Shows Where Improvements are Needed



SOURCES: CDC National HIV Surveillance System and Medical Monitoring Project, 2011.

*Antiretroviral therapy

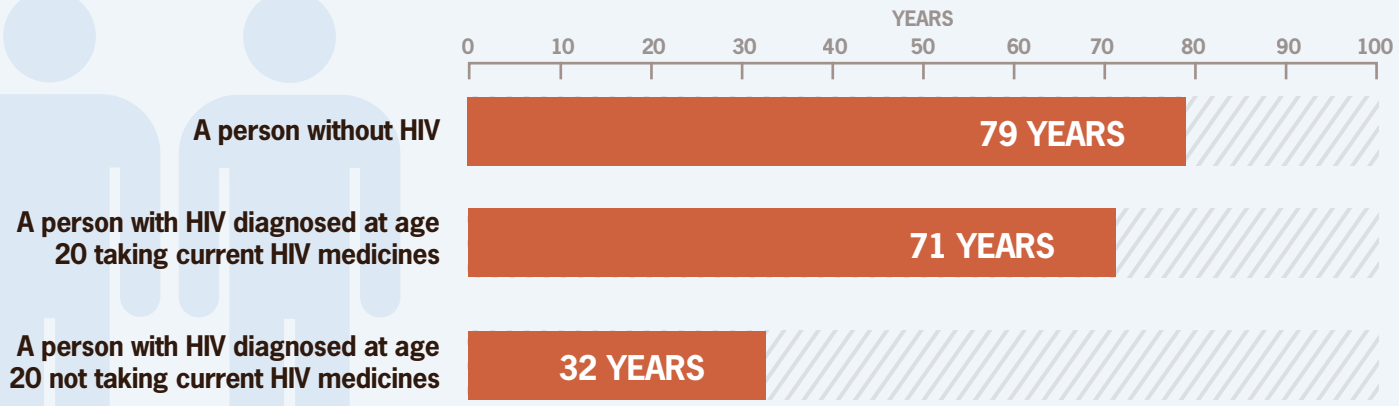
Achieving Viral Suppression: More People with HIV Need to be in Medical Care



SOURCES: CDC National HIV Surveillance System and Medical Monitoring Project, 2011.

*Antiretroviral therapy

HIV Medicines Help People with HIV Live Longer
(AVERAGE YEARS OF LIFE)



SOURCES: National Vital Statistics Reports, 2012; PLoS One, 2013; and Journal of the American Medical Association, 1993.

What Can Be Done

The Federal government is

- Investing in HIV prevention, HIV testing, and HIV medical care and support services.
- Expanding and integrating the use of public health and clinical data to get and keep people living with HIV in HIV medical care.
- Developing guidelines and supporting training for health care providers on HIV testing, care, treatment, and prevention.
- Expanding access to quality health care for people with HIV, and all Americans, through the Affordable Care Act.

Doctors, nurses, and health care systems can

- Test patients for HIV as a regular part of medical care.
- Counsel patients who do not have HIV on how to prevent it.
- Make sure people living with HIV are prescribed and take HIV medicines, stay in care and get supportive services such as nutrition, housing, or mental health services.
- Work with health departments to get and keep people in HIV medical care.

Health departments and community-based organizations can

- Expand HIV testing services to get people into HIV medical care quickly once they are diagnosed.
- Expand the use of public health and clinical data to improve HIV medical care and increase the number of people who achieve viral suppression.

Everyone can

- Learn how to prevent HIV and take steps to protect themselves and their partners.
- Know their HIV status by getting tested.
- Get tested once a year or even more often if they are at high risk of getting HIV.

People living with HIV can

- Get into HIV medical care as soon as possible and stay in care.
- Take HIV medicines every day to achieve viral suppression, which helps them stay healthy, live longer, and reduce their risk of transmitting the virus to others.

For more information, please contact
Telephone: 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
***TTY*: 1-888-232-6348**
Web: www.cdc.gov/info
Web: www.cdc.gov
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30333
Publication date: 11/25/2014

www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/HIV-AIDS-medical-care

www.cdc.gov/mmwr

CS2389154-B