



The HIV/AIDS Epidemic Worldwide 1980-1999

The following text discusses HIV/AIDS infection rates between 1980 and 1999. The text is based on [United Nations data presented in the form of a map and a graph](#). Read the text as an example of how to discuss statistics. In particular, notice the following expressions:

- increased / rose / soared / shot up / grew
- decreased / fell / plunged / dropped / reduced / declined
- gradually / slowly / steadily
- rapidly / dramatically / sharply / steeply / at an alarming rate
- rose to about 250,000 / soared to 700,000
- has risen from half a million in 1984 to 4 million today
- remained at around 100,000
- the figure has levelled out at 200,000

Now look at [the most recent HIV/AIDS statistics \(up to the end of 2003\)](#) and rewrite the text accordingly. (*To save time, you can copy and paste the original text into a wordprocessed document and then make the relevant changes.*) Many of the 2003 statistics cover a range [e.g. 610,000 - 1.1 million]: in such cases, you will probably find it easiest to use the higher figure.

AIDS, first detected around 1980, has become one of the world's most significant health problems. Today 36.1 million worldwide are infected with the HIV virus that leads to AIDS and over 28 million of these are in sub-Saharan Africa. Other regions cannot afford to relax, however: the number of HIV infections is growing at an alarming rate in Asia.

The number of *new* infections has risen steadily in sub-Saharan Africa from around half a million in 1984 to 4 million today. This contrasts with North Africa and the Middle East, where the rate has hardly risen at all, remaining at around 80,000.

In highly industrialised countries such as the USA and western Europe, as well as in the Caribbean and South America, the number of new HIV infections increased gradually between 1980 and 1987, but since then the figure has levelled out at roughly 40,000.

The trend in South and South-East Asia is extremely worrying. In the early years (1980-1988) the rate of new infections rose gradually to about 250,000. Over the next two years, it soared to 700,000 and since then has risen gradually to 780,000.

The rate of new infections in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (the former

Soviet bloc) is relatively low. It has remained at around 100,000 for many years. However, there has been a steep increase over the past five years with the current rate being roughly 250,000.

In summary, the world still has much to worry about. In particular, the HIV/AIDS epidemic is hitting sub-Saharan Africa extremely hard, while in South and South-East Asia the disease is growing at an alarming rate.

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