



BRITISH COLUMBIA CENTRE *for* EXCELLENCE *in* HIV/AIDS

What is Treatment as Prevention[®]?

Treatment as Prevention[®] (TasP[®]) consists of widespread HIV testing and the immediate and full offer of highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART) to those who test positive and are medically eligible. This treatment has been shown to greatly improve a patient's quality of life and extend longevity by decades, while dramatically reducing the likelihood of transmission. Once on sustained antiretroviral treatment and care, a patient's viral load decreases to undetectable levels. On continued regular treatment and care, an individual can reach an undetectable level of viral load. The expansion of HIV testing and early treatment in British Columbia with HAART under TasP[®] is linked to a number of positive health outcomes. These include consistent and profound population-level decreases in morbidity, mortality and HIV transmission.¹

TasP[®] by the Numbers in BC

- TasP[®] has resulted in a significant decrease of HIV transmission among people who inject drugs; and the virtual elimination of transmission from mother to child.²
- Expanding TasP[®] could save up to \$66.5 million over the next 25 years, compared with a scenario with reduced access to antiretroviral medication.

Between 1994 and 2013:

- New HIV cases declined steadily and consistently by 65 per cent overall.
- The number of new AIDS cases decreased by 88 per cent.
- The number of AIDS-related deaths dropped by 83 per cent.
- The percent of deaths attributed to an AIDS-defining illness decreased from 89 to 20 per cent, which corresponds to a drop of 77 per cent.³

Timeline for TasP[®] in British Columbia

- In 1996, Dr. Montaner was the key driver in the discovery of highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART), a gamechanger that decreases viral load in HIV patients. HAART dramatically reduces the risk of spreading HIV, while improving the health and longevity of patients on treatment. Dr. Montaner was the lead investigator of a seminal international clinical trial, demonstrating non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NNRTI)-based HAART could render HIV plasma levels undetectable and lead to remission of the disease. Dr. Montaner presented the findings at the 1996 International AIDS Society Conference in Vancouver, where US researchers added confirming evidence based on clinical trials. Vancouver is widely seen as the birthplace of modern HIV therapy.

¹ <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3922718/>

² <http://www.cfenet.ubc.ca/publications/centre-documents/hiv-monitoring-quarterly-reports-first-quarter-2014>

³ <http://www.cfenet.ubc.ca/news/releases/study-finds-aids-incidence-and-related-deaths-dramatically-decreasing-bc-with-access>



- In 2006, Dr. Montaner pioneered TasP®, an innovative new concept. TasP® calls for providing full access to HAART at the earliest point following an HIV diagnosis as a means of curbing the spread of HIV. That year, *The Lancet* published a peer-reviewed study led by Dr. Montaner that supported the efficiency of TasP® in reducing new HIV cases. The research was presented at the International AIDS Society Conference in Toronto.
- In 2009, the BC Government announced the launching of a four-year pilot project of the TasP® strategy, called STOP HIV/AIDS. In 2012, before the pilot had wrapped up — and based on its early and remarkable success — the BC Government announced a province-wide expansion of the program. The announcement came with \$19.9 million in funding for the province-wide rollout of STOP HIV/AIDS in an effort to provide prevention, testing and treatment to hard-to-reach and highly impacted communities.
- In November 2014, the BC Government and Health Minister Terry Lake recognized Dr. Montaner for his innovative work in fighting HIV. “Nobody in BC or in Canada, and possibly the world has made a bigger contribution to the field of HIV/AIDS research and treatment than Dr. Julio Montaner,” said Minister Lake.
- In 2014, Dr. Montaner was named Officer in the Order of Canada. In 2015, he was inducted into the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame.
- In 2015, Vancouver hosted the International AIDS Society Conference.

Global Adoption of TasP® as an Effective, Evidence-Based Strategy Against HIV & AIDS

Highlights of the global adoption of the made-in-BC TasP® strategy:

- In November 2011, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton publicly endorsed HIV TasP® as a central piece within the PEPFAR global strategy.
- In July 2013, the World Health Organization (WHO) fully incorporated TasP® in their new Global HIV Treatment Guidelines.
- In September 2014, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon formally endorsed the UNAIDS 90-90-90 global HIV strategy, based on the made-in-BC TasP® strategy.

TasP® has been proven to be one of the most successful strategies created in the fight against HIV and AIDS and has been endorsed internationally by world leaders, including: UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Former US President Bill Clinton. The BC TasP® strategy has been adopted by China, France, Brazil, Spain, Panama, Argentina, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, the Australian state of Queensland, and parts of the United States — to name a few.

The strategy has gained support from the International AIDS Society (IAS), WHO, UNAIDS, PEPFAR, the Clinton Foundation HIV/AIDS Initiative, Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières, the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) and international research-based pharmaceutical industries (among other key international stakeholders). The effective approach forms the basis of the UNAIDS 90-90-90 strategy to reach an AIDS-free generation worldwide by 2030. The ambitious, but reachable global HIV strategy calls for three target goals to be achieved by 2020: 90 per cent of all those living with HIV diagnosed, 90 per cent of those diagnosed with HIV on antiretroviral treatment, and 90 per cent of those on treatment virally suppressed.

