

# Merck's Commitment to Addressing HIV and AIDS

HIV and AIDS represents one of the greatest health challenges facing the world today. For more than 20 years, Merck & Co., Inc.<sup>1</sup> has been at the forefront of the effort to respond to the HIV and AIDS pandemic through a three-pronged approach:

- Working to discover, develop and deliver breakthrough medicines.
- Developing long-term business models that help our products reach as many people as possible.
- Participating in partnerships with governments, multilateral organizations, community-based organizations, other corporations and non-governmental organizations to help build infrastructure and address health and development challenges around the world.

Through these and other pioneering efforts, Merck is making a substantial contribution toward meeting one of the most critical needs targeted by the United Nations Millennium Development Goals: halting and beginning to reverse the spread of HIV and AIDS.

## Working to discover and develop breakthrough medicines

Merck's HIV clinical research program began in 1985. Merck scientists were among the first to discover and develop medicines for the treatment of HIV and AIDS. In 1988, Merck researchers were the first to demonstrate that the inhibition of the protease enzyme would prevent replication of HIV. The following year, Merck scientists published the first crystal structure for HIV protease. These insights led to the development of a new, powerful class of medicines to treat HIV and AIDS: protease inhibitors. We further enhanced our commitment to HIV care with the discovery in 1992 and subsequent introduction of a non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NNRTI).

In 2005, and most recently in 2008, Merck granted a royalty-free license to the International Partnership for Microbicides to develop, manufacture and distribute a new antiretroviral compound for use as a microbicide to protect women from HIV in resource-poor countries.



Merck works with partners around the world to combat HIV and AIDS. Here a counselor in Botswana provides support to a person living with HIV and AIDS with support from the African Comprehensive HIV/AIDS Partnerships.

In 2006, Merck's commitment to increasing the convenience of treatment led to the development, in partnership with Gilead Sciences and Bristol-Myers Squibb, of a once-daily, single tablet regimen, which can simplify HIV treatment for people living with HIV.

Most recently, in 2007, Merck introduced the first integrase inhibitor for the treatment of HIV infection and the first antiretroviral treatment to target the integrase enzyme, which is essential for HIV replication.

Today, Merck remains focused on developing new treatments for millions of individuals who are already infected with HIV.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Merck & Co., Inc. (Whitehouse Station, NJ, USA) operates as Merck Sharp & Dohme (MSD) in most countries outside the United States.

<sup>2</sup> In 2007, Merck discontinued research into its investigational HIV vaccine, based on data from clinical trials showing the vaccine was not effective. Merck is committed to studying the data closely and sharing it with the scientific community to inform the ongoing search for an effective HIV vaccine.



## Developing long-term business models that help our products reach as many people as possible

Since our first HIV products reached the market more than a decade ago, Merck has worked to expand access to these medicines — particularly in the world's least developed countries and those hardest hit by the pandemic. Key efforts include:

- **Merck's HIV and AIDS Pricing Policy:** Merck is committed to ensuring access to our antiretroviral (ARV) medicines through a differential pricing policy that provides our ARVs at dramatically lower prices — at which Merck does not profit — to people living in the world's least developed countries and those hardest hit by the pandemic, as defined by various United Nations indices. Today, 83 percent of the total number of patients being treated with a regimen containing one of Merck's ARVs — an estimated 635,000 patients — are benefiting from our Company's lowest prices.
- **Manufacturing and Licensing Opportunities:** Merck is committed to seeking additional ways to reduce the cost of its ARVs for people living in the world's poorest countries and those hardest hit by the pandemic, including through partnering with external manufacturers and suppliers to achieve incremental efficiencies.
- **Global Registration:** Merck is committed to rapidly registering our ARV medicines worldwide. To date, Merck's existing ARVs are registered in more than 115 countries and territories worldwide.
- **Patient Assistance Program:** To help patients in the United States who cannot afford treatment with Merck ARVs, the SUPPORT program is available. SUPPORT provides personalized support and patient advocacy regarding individual reimbursement issues. The program also provides Merck ARVs free of charge to eligible patients. More information is available at [www.merckhelps.com](http://www.merckhelps.com).
- **Accelerating Access Initiative:** Merck is a founding member of the Accelerating Access Initiative (AAI), a cooperative endeavor of UNAIDS, the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Bank and several research-based pharmaceutical companies. Established in 2000, AAI seeks to improve access to HIV-related medicines and diagnostics in developing countries and those severely affected by HIV.

## Participating in Public-Private Partnerships

Improving access is about more than simply making our medicines available. The most important factors for long-term sustainability are strengthening health care infrastructure, ensuring adequate financing for health, and helping to build local health care capacity through training and support. Public-private partnerships have a critical role to play in this process. Following

To learn more about Merck's commitment to HIV and AIDS, visit [www.merck.com/cr](http://www.merck.com/cr)

are examples of some of the many programs and partnerships Merck supports around the world to help address the challenges of HIV and AIDS.

- ***The African Comprehensive HIV/AIDS Partnerships (ACHAP)***  
A partnership among the Government of Botswana, Merck & Co., Inc./The Merck Company Foundation, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to support and enhance Botswana's national response to HIV and AIDS through a comprehensive approach to prevention, care, treatment and support.
- ***China-MSD HIV/AIDS Partnership***  
A public-private partnership with China's Ministry of Health to provide HIV and AIDS prevention, patient care, treatment and support. Announced in 2005, the project focuses on a range of interventions including: education, counseling, testing, harm reduction and health services, including treatment and care for people living with HIV and AIDS.
- ***Romania-Merck Partnership***  
Merck has worked with the Romanian government since 1997 to increase access to treatment and care for thousands of its children and adults living with HIV and AIDS. In support of the government's national AIDS strategy, Merck has contributed \$1.5 million toward projects to improve HIV and AIDS infrastructure, helping to raise the standard of care for patients.
- ***Caribbean Business Councils on HIV and AIDS***  
Working with the Caribbean Association of Industry & Commerce, The Jamaica Employers' Federation and others, Merck is supporting the development of national business councils on HIV and AIDS across the region to mobilize the private business sector's response to the pandemic.
- ***IBANI-SE HIV/AIDS Initiative***  
Driven by expanding industrial development, Bonny Island in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria has become a hive of social activity and mobility, and is a focal point for the regional HIV epidemic in West Africa. Merck, together with its partners, has provided technical guidance and has helped to facilitate a community-led, comprehensive HIV and AIDS and malaria program on Bonny Island.
- ***The Blueprint for Business Action on HIV/AIDS***  
An innovative tool developed by a predominantly African advisory board specifically for African businesses to aid them in developing and implementing a comprehensive workplace program response to the HIV and AIDS epidemic. Merck is making the tool available at no cost.
- ***U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief***  
Merck is working in partnership with the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief Partnership for Pediatric AIDS Treatment to identify scientific and technical solutions to improve access to ARV treatment for children living with HIV and AIDS in resource-limited settings.