

Advancing Cures

Investing In Our Health

Diseases like cancer, stroke, and mental illness touch each of us, our family members, and patients in every community across our country. As America's medical research agency and the largest funder of biomedical research in the world, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) sparks remarkable scientific advances that aid understanding, prevention, treatment, and cures for thousands of diseases.

Thanks in large part to NIH-funded research, Americans today are able to overcome medical conditions that were once considered dire, and many more medical breakthroughs are within our grasp. But only if NIH is adequately funded.

*Without NIH funding, critical research to cure diseases and save lives will stall or end.
Investing in NIH helps the people we care about most, now and in the future.*

Thanks in part to our nation's investment in NIH:

- Death rates from cancer have dropped more than 25 percent since 1990.¹
- Deaths from heart disease and stroke have decreased 70 percent over the last 50 years.²
- Today, cure rates for childhood cancer are greater than 85 percent.³
- A child born today in the U.S. has an average lifespan of about 78 years – nearly three decades longer than a baby born in 1900.⁴
- Because of HIV therapies, individuals starting successful HIV treatment in their 20s and 30s can be expected to live into their 60s and 70s.⁵
- From 1990–2013, deaths from stroke fell 40 percent.⁶

Meeting Patient Needs

Societal and demographic trends also threaten medical progress: an aging population, rising obesity rates, an epidemic of diabetes, and Alzheimer's disease threaten to reverse our progress against the chronic diseases millions of Americans face every day.

Patients can't wait. We must support NIH research to save lives and ensure the health of our nation, our communities, our loved ones, and ourselves.

For many patients facing serious illness, clinical trials are the only remaining option after trying all standard therapies.

In fact, more than 60 percent of children with cancer receive treatment through a clinical trial.⁷ NIH has a strong commitment to supporting research on all cancers, and in FY 2013 invested more than \$185 million in pediatric cancer research alone.⁸

Eighty-six percent of children diagnosed with cancer today go on to live full, healthy lives. The increased survival rate for children is directly linked to the enrollment of patients in clinical trials, trials which lead to better treatments and less human suffering. NIH funding makes possible many of the clinical trials currently recruiting patients.

Sparking Innovative Cures

NIH Research Means Hope: Today's Budget Caps Threaten That Hope.

NIH-funded research has sparked remarkable advances in medical treatment for countless diseases:

- It led to the discovery of cancer immunotherapies that help T cells fight tumors, which Science magazine declared the “breakthrough of the year” in 2013.
- NIH funded the mapping of the human genome – giving us critical insights into human genetics, human development, and disease progression, and placing diagnostics and therapies for everything from cancer to Ebola within our reach.

Many NIH research projects are underway, holding similar promises for patients, but only if supported through continued federal investment. Such efforts include:

- **NIH's Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Initiative** seeks to map the brain's circuitry and develop new technologies that visualize neural activity in real time, at the speed of thought. The BRAIN Initiative will transform how we understand, diagnose, and treat neurological conditions and mental illnesses.
- **NIH's Illuminating Druggable Genome (IDG) Project** aims to improve personalized medicine by understanding how our genes can be modified through targeted therapies.

Acting Now For Cutting-Edge Research

Budgetary cuts force NIH to reject thousands of promising research proposals every year. These projects that could produce new insights on pandemic flu prevention or a treatment for Alzheimer's, but the ability of NIH to support vital research is reeling from a decade-long funding decline that threatens our nation's health. Improving our country's health and well-being requires sustained funding and investment in promising research.

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