

SOUTH FLORIDA
SunSentinel
SunSentinel.com**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR****HIV treatments can come with side effects**

Your recent story, "New Reports of HIV Soar in Florida," hammers home the fact that HIV/AIDS is still a significant problem that needs to be addressed, not only in Florida, but also worldwide.

Grizzly scenes of patients covered in sores and wasting away have been replaced by those of healthy men and women who, by taking antiretroviral medications, are able to live relatively normal lives. This has created a false sense of security among those who are most at risk.

What many fail to realize is that while these drugs can help people live longer, they also come with side effects that occur at an earlier age including: cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic liver disease, reduced kidney function, as well as several different kinds of cancers.

The Campbell Foundation has spent the last 20 years funding research not only to find a cure for AIDS, but also to study the impact of existing medications on those with the disease. We have funded more than 130 research projects and awarded more than \$9 million to scientists around the world. Another \$1 million has been given to those providing services to the HIV-positive community.

Have we made progress? Absolutely. Is the battle over? Absolutely not. With a 23 percent increase in the number of reported HIV cases in Florida so far this year, we have so much more work to do.

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