

Dr. Anthony S. Fauci Transcript

Anthony S. Fauci, M.D.



In the summer of 1981, when Dr. Anthony S. Fauci read the first reports about a strange immune disorder among gay men, he felt concern about a new disease emerging. But when the same condition appeared soon after among intravenous drug users, “I started to get goose pimples,” he recalls. “I said, ‘My goodness. This could be an infection that is transmitted by blood and by sex, and I do not have the foggiest idea of what it is.’”

A senior investigator with the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases at the time, Dr. Fauci was one of the few researchers devoted solely to human immunobiology. He assembled a small group of scientists, including Drs. Clifford Lane and Henry Masur, to study the emerging disease. In short order, Dr. Fauci converted his lab from one that explored fundamental questions of immunology to one that focused on AIDS.

“As every month went by, I became more convinced that we were dealing with something that was going to be a disaster for society,” he says. In a 1982 *Annals of Internal Medicine* editorial, Dr. Fauci predicted that AIDS would not stay confined to the populations where it first appeared.

When he became NIAID director in 1984, Dr. Fauci continued his laboratory and clinical research in addition to his administrative duties, believing he could have a broader impact on the field of immunology in these multiple roles. As a researcher, he made breakthroughs in understanding how HIV destroys the body’s immune system, and he helped develop strategies to restore immune defenses. As an administrator, Dr. Fauci led efforts that convinced Congress to dramatically increase funds for AIDS research, and he established a Division of AIDS within the Institute.

Remembering the spirit of the people in his lab during those early years, Dr. Fauci says, “It is an indescribable experience knowing that what you are doing will have an impact on the lives of tens, if not hundreds, of millions of people. That gives you a lot of energy to do what you are doing.”

Today, Dr. Fauci continues as NIAID director, clinician, and chief of an AIDS research lab, in addition to being one of the government’s leading spokespersons on HIV/AIDS issues.

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Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, July 3, 1986
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Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, March 7, 1989
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Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, June 29, 1993
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Webcast Video

[Thirty Years of HIV/AIDS: A Personal Journey Video Link](#)
Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, May 31, 2011
Lecture at the National Institutes of Health *Webcast*