



Canada's source for
HIV and hepatitis C
information

La source canadienne
de renseignements sur
le VIH et l'hépatite C

CATIE joins in mourning the death of a brilliant scientist and friend - Professor Dr. Mark Wainberg

Dr. Mark Wainberg passed away suddenly earlier this week. He was a brilliant scientist who helped to greatly extend our understanding about HIV and how this virus can develop resistance to treatment. Dr. Wainberg's career was centred at McGill University where he was the Director of the McGill AIDS Centre. He became internationally renowned for the impact that his laboratory had on HIV treatment, as well as for the global impact of his efforts to help make HIV treatment more accessible.

Dr. Wainberg was part of the team that helped enable the 5th International Conference on AIDS to be held in Montreal in 1989. Also in the late 1980s, Wainberg and his team worked on the early development of one of the first antiviral drugs—3TC, lamivudine—that was to play a key role in combination HIV treatment in the early 1990s and is still used today.

Dr. Wainberg's students and colleagues helped to extend the understanding of how HIV developed the ability to resist treatments. In recent years he extended his expertise to advising teams of researchers who are trying to develop a cure for HIV.

In 1998 Dr. Wainberg became president of the International AIDS Society (IAS) and used his leadership in concert with others to bring the International AIDS Conference to Africa for the first time. That conference was held in Durban in 2000 and the incredible activism that accompanied it helped accelerate the campaign to make HIV treatment more affordable and accessible to people in low- and middle-income countries.

Dr. Wainberg helped to mentor many people including junior scientists, many of whom are now working in the field of HIV. He also became a supporter and friend of people in community groups including CATIE. He wrote the forward to the last edition of *Managing Your Health*, a key CATIE publication. Dr. Wainberg also supported the HIV community's efforts to end unjust prosecutions of people living with HIV.

Despite his long hours, awards and endless travel to scientific meetings and congresses, he was always friendly and warm and made himself accessible to everyone. Dr. Wainberg's absence has touched many of us and his drive to build and maintain alliances between governments, public health, scientists and community groups is an important part of his legacy.

We celebrate Dr. Wainberg's many achievements but those of us in Canada and around the globe who struggle to end the HIV epidemic have lost a friend, mentor and key ally.

[The IAS remembers Mark Wainberg](#)

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