



*Eliane*

## Facts about HIV in the future

- There have been three people cured from HIV in the world.
- This cure is not suited for people living with HIV and requires very dangerous surgery.
- There is a lot of research needed to find a cure for HIV and they hope to have found one in fifteen to twenty years.
- People living with HIV and on effective treatment can get as old as people without HIV.
- When someone has an undetectable viral load they cannot pass on HIV.

# Eye on the future

This is the last of twelve monthly columns from Eliane. Over the last year she discussed several topics about living with HIV in The Netherlands.

We will hopefully start a new year with a new writer.

Stay tuned.

My journey with HIV treatment started when I was living abroad. Before that I was not sure if I would make it to my 42nd birthday. I was 25 when I received my diagnoses and my healthcare provider told it like it was a death sentence, which felt like I was hit by lightning. I did not have hope at that time, because I did not have access to medication. Luckily this changed when I travelled to South Africa for treatment. That moment I started to see a little light of hope burning in my heart. Since then I have been fighting to stay alive and I have achieved many of my goals. For example, I am a mother of three children, I continue to live my life as an artist and I have family and friends who always will support me. What do I want more?

How do I see my future with HIV? I am still keeping a lot of hope that one day there will be a cure for HIV, but until then I wish everyone could have access to medication. Everyone should have access to treatment. This would also be handy for myself. When I'm travelling I do not need to worry for my medication anymore. When I visit places around the world, now I have to count the pills according to the days I will

be there. But what if I lose my medication? Or if I will stay longer than I had planned? If there is access to medication everywhere in the world all people with HIV could live healthy lives and for me the stress whilst travelling would be less. Many times I ask myself the question if I would take the cure if it would be available. HIV does not make me worry about my future at all, but my other disease does. Honestly, I am happy with my one pill per day, considering I started with twenty pills fifteen years ago. If I would be cured from HIV and stop taking HIV medication, I would still have diabetes, which makes me sicker than HIV. Therefore I have decided that HIV will not hold my future dreams, I will continue to live a healthy lifestyle and take my medication everyday. I will do my routine check ups and live my life like every day was my last living day on this earth. I hope to reach the age of a hundred years old! For now, I will call my HIV journey 'carpe diem', as I live today to see tomorrow coming my way!

## *Hiv Vereniging*

The Dutch Association of People Living with HIV (Hiv Vereniging) represents the interests of all people with HIV in the Netherlands, irrespective of background.

We provide information about living with HIV and organise all kinds of meet-ups.

## *Servicepunt*

Our team of expert volunteers can be contacted for any question about living with HIV, by telephone on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 14:00 – 22:00 hrs, or by email: [servicepunt@hivvereniging.nl](mailto:servicepunt@hivvereniging.nl).

See [www.hivvereniging.nl](http://www.hivvereniging.nl)