Team CrofootMD Timeline

Intro

Dr. Gordon Crofoot is a highly respected Internal Medicine and Infectious Disease specialist with over 40 years of experience in HIV/AIDS care, research, and advocacy. Based in Houston, Texas, he has dedicated his career to advancing healthcare access and treatment for the general LGBTQIA+ & marginalized communities.

1960 The Journey Begins...

Dr. Gordon E.Crofoot Jr. spent his formative years in Glenview, a suburb north of Chicago, Illinois. Growing up in this close-knit community, he developed a strong sense of compassion and a desire to help others, qualities that would later define his medical career.

On the Journey, But a Few Bumps 1965

It all started a long time ago in Glenview, Illinois, where I was raised. I was in the first graduating class at Glenbrook South High School. I had pretty good grades and was involved in extracurricular activities and sports, including cross country, tennis, wrestling, and gymnastics. I hear that Glenbrook South is now listed as the 10th best high school in Illinois. Congratulations! I went on to Michigan State University and graduated with a degree in chemistry and biochemistry. Most of my classes were in science. Looking back now, I wish I had taken more classes in History, English, Psychology, Archaeology and other subjects besides just science. Although I was not good enough to play college sports, I did practice with the wrestling team.

1970 Accepted to Northwestern - Just in Time!

I always knew I wanted to be a doctor. When I graduated college, I applied to only two medical schools—my first choice was always Northwestern in Chicago.

But it was 1970, and the Vietnam War draft loomed over every young man's future. Birth dates were randomly assigned draft numbers. Mine was drawn as #60—low enough to expect a draft notice.

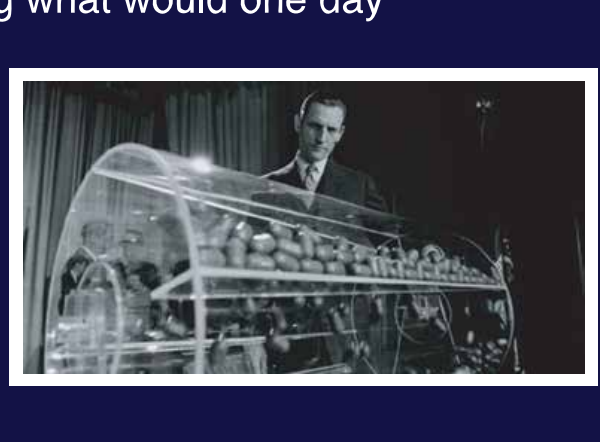
Most of my classmates applied to as many schools as possible. Getting into medical school could defer the draft, though if you were already accepted when drafted, you were placed on the "doctor draft" until age 40.

I took a risk. I only applied to two schools.

In April, I got my draft notice. But just two days later, I received my acceptance letter from Northwestern. I immediately called to accept—and explained that I had a "small problem." They laughed and said, "We'll take care of that."

I started medical school with the possibility of being called to serve as a military doctor at any time until age 40. But the war ended, no new conflicts arose, and I was never drafted.

Instead, I began building what would one day become CrofootMD.



Early Contributions to Medicine 1970

A graduate of Michigan State University, Dr.Crofoot earned his medical degree from Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and completed his Internal Medicine residency at Baylor College of Medicine. In 1998, he became Medical Director at the Montrose Clinic (now Legacy Community Health Services), where he played a pivotal role in developing the Ryan White Title 1 HIV treatment program for uninsured patients and expanding the Next Step program for newly diagnosed individuals.

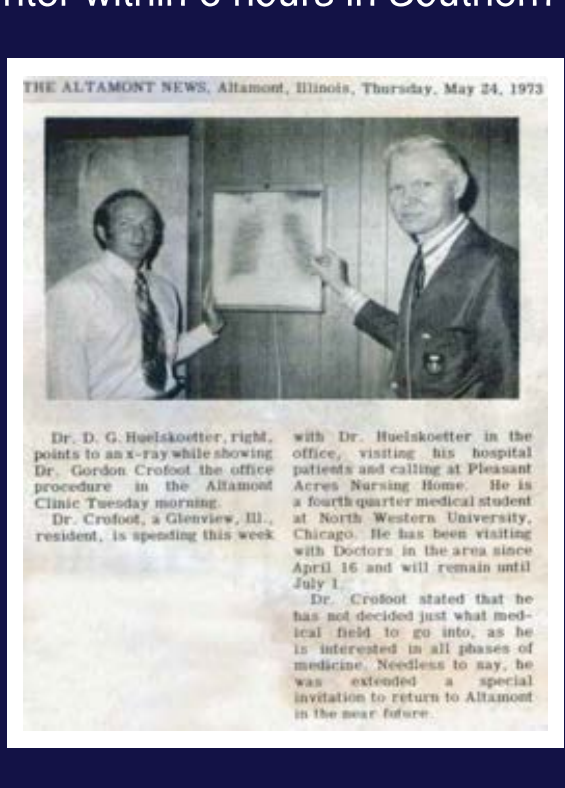
Northwestern University
Feinberg School of Medicine

1973 Almost Kicked Out of Medical School

Medical school was challenging, but we also had a lot of fun. The medical school and law school were located together in downtown Chicago on Lake Michigan. We lived in the same dormitory and ate in the same cafeteria, but the schools had separate buildings next to each other. Medical students and law students typically do not get along well. Each group of four medical students had our desks together with our cadavers under our desks. Ours was named Ethyl. I almost got expelled from medical school when four of us took Ethyl's leg unwrapped and rode up and down in the law school's elevator until we were caught. Lack of sleep for days can make you a little crazy. We promised to never do anything like that again, but we started a new trend of working on our cadavers before lunch and then going to the cafeteria in our dirty, smelly lab coats to sit down and eat with the law students.

Small Town Doctor 1973

In May, I worked in a small town seeing patients and educating youth about health in Southern Illinois for 5 months before graduating from medical school. The local doc took a vacation and I saw a pregnant woman age 40 with 14 kids, "Mrs. do you know you are having twins" No, I think I scared her and made national news. I delivered 2 girls that night and I delivered a girl to her oldest daughter. National news "small town doctor delivered 3 girls to mother and daughter within 6 hours in Southern Illinois."



THE ALTAMONT NEWS, Altamont, Illinois, Thursday, May 24, 1973

1974 Medical School Graduation

In June, I graduated from Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago.

Northwestern Medicine
Feinberg School of Medicine

Chief Medical Resident 1976

I served as Chief Medical Resident at St. Luke's Hospital, working alongside the legendary Dr. Robert Hall—renowned cardiologist and former personal physician to President Dwight D. Eisenhower. It was an extraordinary experience... until those unforgettable mornings when I'd arrive at the hospital only to hear, "Dr. Hall was flown out this morning—to see a king? A prince? Maybe a famous actor?" Then came the punchline: "You'll be giving his lecture today."

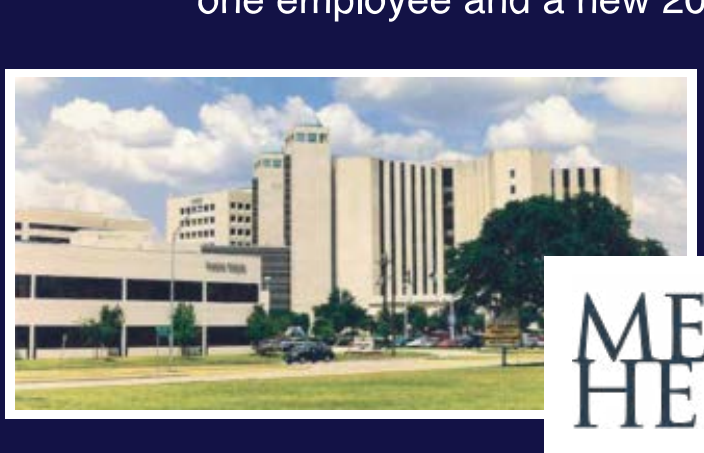
TEXAS HEART INSTITUTE

1977 Kelsey Clinic

In June, I was hired by the Kelsey-Seybold Clinic as an internist, with the possibility of eventually replacing Dr. Mavis Kelsey, the clinic's founder and sole general internist. At the time, the clinic had 55 specialists and primarily served Houston's wealthy clientele. It soon became clear that Dr. Kelsey had no plans to retire, so I chose to open my own private practice in General Internal Medicine. Many of his patients followed me—and to this day, I still care for a few of them.

Private Practice 1979

In June, I started my priavte practice admitting patients at the Southwest Memorial Hospital in Houston, Texas with one employee and a new 20 mb computer.



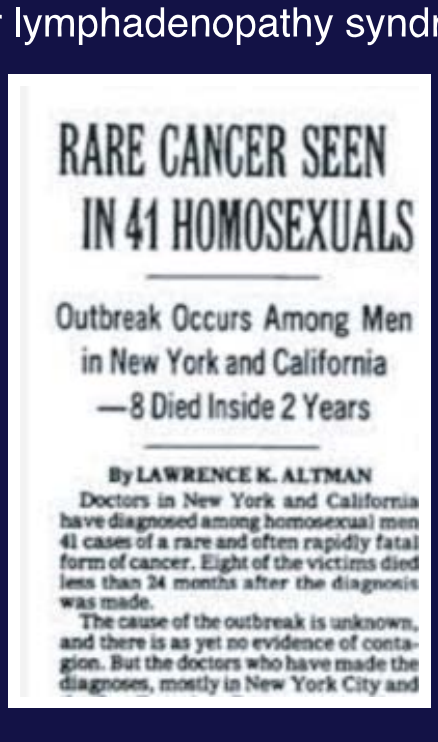
1979 First HIV Infection

I saw my first patient with an HIV infection. At that time, we did not know it was HIV or a virus. I hospitalized this young man with a fever, headache, muscle pain, and a low white blood cell count. I was frustrated when I was just out of my residency program and I could not diagnose him with anything. My discharge summary said this patient had an FVI a "funny viral illness." Years later we found it was a viral illness, but it was not funny. He had a primary HIV infection and died in 1989.

The Name is AIDS 1981

On June 5, Dr. Michael Gottlieb called this disease Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome in a published paper in Los Angeles; and Lawrence Altman reported 41 cases of Kaposi Sarcoma in gay men in a New York Times article.

At that time, it was GRID or gay related immune disease or gay plague or lymphadenopathy syndrome, or gay cancer.



RARE CANCER SEEN IN 41 HOMOSEXUALS

Outbreak Occurs Among Men in New York and California —8 Died Inside 2 Years

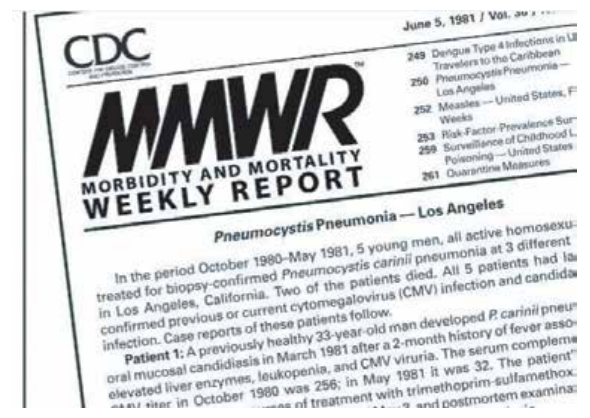
By LAWRENCE K. ALTMAN

Doctors in New York and California have diagnosed among homosexual men 41 cases of a rare and often rapidly fatal form of cancer. Eight of the victims died less than 24 months after the diagnosis was made.

The cause of the outbreak is unknown, and there is as yet no evidence of contagion. But the doctors who have made the diagnoses, mostly in New York City and

1981 Pneumocystis Pneumonia

My first case of pneumocystis pneumonia was in 1981 and second was later that year. They were both hospitalized on a ventilator. They both died. I became one of the most experienced doctors in Houston with this new unknown disease called AIDS.



CDC

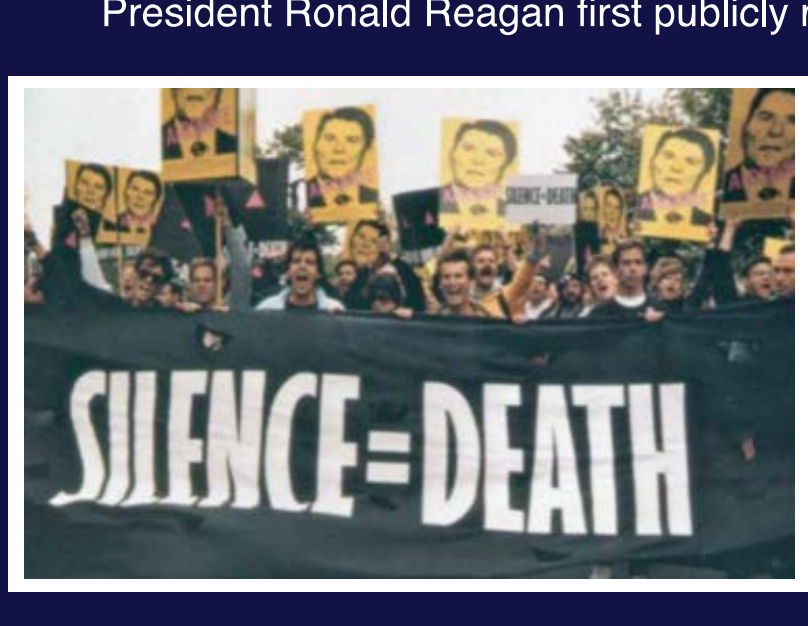
MMWR

MORBIDITY AND MORTALITY WEEKLY REPORT

Pneumocystis Pneumonia—Los Angeles

Ronald Reagan SILENT 1981

Health officials first became aware of AIDS in the summer of 1981. Young and otherwise healthy gay men began getting sick and dying of unusual illnesses normally associated with people with weakened immune systems. Yet, U.S. leaders had remained largely silent and unresponsive to the health emergency. And if it wasn't until September 1985, four years after the crisis began, that President Ronald Reagan first publicly mentioned AIDS.

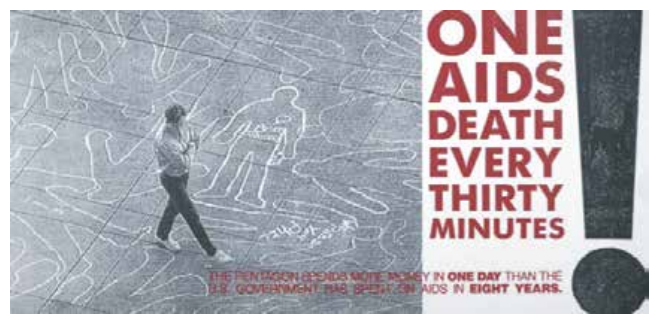


1985 Nancy Reagan...

My personal interaction with the government in silence occurred when a patient of mine, who had severe Kaposi's sarcoma in both legs, was invited to dine with the Reagans at the White House in the summer of 1985. He held a prominent position in the Democratic party and was undergoing chemotherapy through a Travenol syringe pump, with a Port-a-cath IV line secured to his left chest.

During a security check by the Secret Service, they mistook the IV line for a weapon concealed under his coat, leading to a swift and forceful reaction where he was restrained and taken to another room to be searched. The incident resulted in the IV line being partially dislodged and the sutures being damaged. I received a call from the White House and the Secret Service regarding the mishap, following which the pump was rescured, and he proceeded to join the dinner. Seated beside Nancy Reagan, he attempted to engage her in a conversation, multiple times, about AIDS and its devastating impact. However, she abruptly requested him to refrain from discussing the matter and said" we do not discuss that issue here."

As his health deteriorated, he underwent the amputation of his leg, becoming wheelchair-bound, with a T4 Helper count of 1. Given his critical condition, I was requested to accompany him to the Atlanta Democratic Convention in 1988 to assist with intravenous antibiotics and chemotherapy. It was a privilege to meet Michael Dukakis & Ted Kennedy and numerous other politicians during this time. I was happy to see much more interest in AIDS and I was asked a lot of questions about what I saw and what needs to happen. I was actually giving an educational lecture on AIDS to the democrats at the convention. Tragically, my patient passed away two months later. The AIDS epidemic loomed large, shrouded in silence, yet its toll was undeniably grave.



Is This Disease Contagious? 1983

My quote in the Houston Chronicle, "it was terrifying. Not knowing why my patients were dying, what it was, or if it was contagious."

Inhale... Inhale... Inhale... 1985

In the mid-1980s, realization emerged in the medical community about the recurrence of Pneumocystis Pneumonia (PCP) in AIDS patients with frequent recurrencies, prompting the need for a prophylactic solution due to its high morality rate. In response, a few AIDS specialists, including Team CrofootMD, explored the use of inhaled pentamidine as a prophylactic solution. This innovative approach, utilizing a specially designed inhaler for precise particle delivery, resulted in the establishment of successful but not perfect prophylactic programs that reduced PCP incidence and severity. Team CrofootMD was one of the first sites to conduct prophylactic inhaled programs.

Further refinements in inhalation techniques including different body positions, enhanced the effectiveness of the prophylactic measures, ultimately saving lives. Subsequent advancements, such as the discovery of high-dose Bactrim DS as a superior treatment for PCP, and once daily or 3 times weekly Bactrim DS as a very effective PCP prophylaxis. This revolutionized the management and prevention of the infection. Great job Team CrofootMD for being with the first.

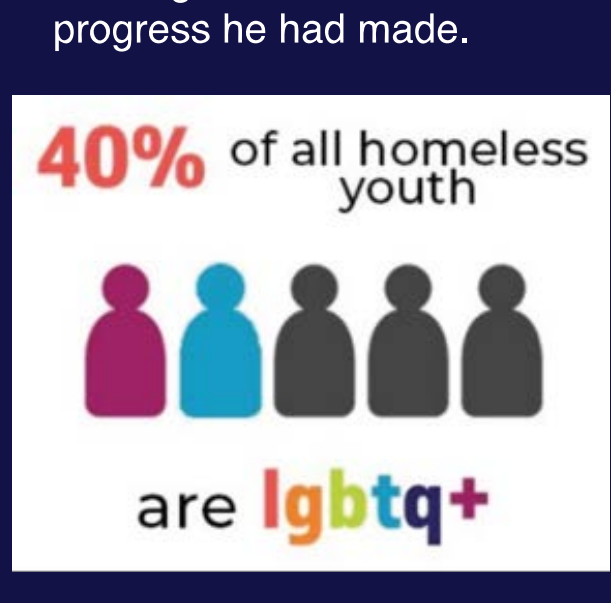
1985 Wow! An HIV Test

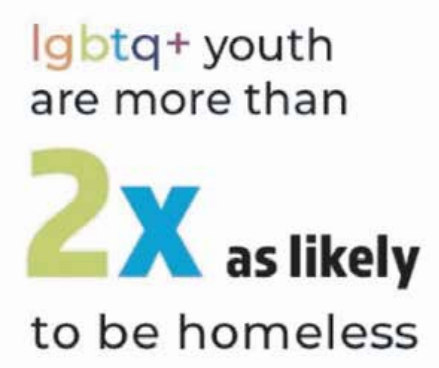
The first HIV test was approved by the FDA in March 1985. Within one year, 402 cases were identified by me. To protect patients' confidentiality, these results were kept secret by me and not placed in medical records but kept in a handwritten notebook. The fear of being HIV-positive was real, as it could lead to losing one's job, apartment, friends, family, and even access to health or life insurance. These papers were my original notes that were never shown to anyone. 140 pages, 1035 people tested HIV-positive by me in 2.5 years after March 1985. My medical partner Dr. Ben Valfre and I waited 8 months to test ourselves in secret. I was negative, but he was positive. He died in 1992. A very scary time.

1985 Homeless Kids Now...

In March, the first HIV test became available. Shortly after that, I began gathering small groups of indigent, homeless street kids, many of whom were also street drug users who lived in the Montrose area. Some were young kids who had been kicked out of their homes due to gender identity issues. They started coming regularly to my fun educational groups were I used street language to communicate with them. I provided honest answers to all their questions and got to know some of them very well. We discussed STDs, explaining what they looked like and and how they were contracted. I often treated the STDs myself and sometimes covered the cost of medications. We also offered free HIV testing and, if someone tested positive, we referred them to programs where they could receive treatment.

I conducted these informal educational programs every 2-4 weeks, usually on a street corner, in a vacant lot, or under the bridge. Each time we met, I asked the group to come up with a name for us that day, and they took pride in naming our group. I was deeply honored when, fourteen years later, one of my favorite young men came to my office dressed impeccably, with a high school degree, a job, and insurance. He disclosed that he was HIV positive and asked me to be his doctor. It was a great honor for me, and I was proud of the progress he had made.





Smuggle?? New AIDS Drugs 1985

In 1985, there were no anti-HIV drugs, and progress in developing new therapies seemed slow. To address this challenge, I established relationships with pharmacies across the border in Mexico that stocked a few drugs thought to have potential anti-HIV properties but were not being studied in the U.S. Some of the most common drugs included Isoprinosine, Ribavirin, and Laetrile. I organized educational sessions, renting school buses to teach people how to discreetly bring these illegal medications into the U.S. In some cases, I worked with grandmothers whose grandchildren were too ill to travel, instructing them on how to smuggle the medications in their cowboy boots. To obtain the drugs, individuals needed a prescription from me, which the pharmacies required before releasing the medication for export. I learned these strategies from Martin Delaney, the founder of "Project Inform" in California. Our friendship grew, and I also supported Project Inform in its efforts.

Martin Delaney was instrumental in raising awareness about HIV and AIDS issues among public policymakers and the general public. He advocated for robust scientific and medical research programs, urged regulatory agencies to expedite the approval of new medications and was a key figure in promoting access to treatments. This work mirrored the themes depicted in the film "Dallas Buyer's Club."

Two years later, federal agents came to my office and opened a briefcase full of my illegal prescriptions and started asking questions. My heart started racing, but they were not concerned about what I did but wanted to know if any drug manufacturers had contacted me to promote the sale of their drugs and promote illedgally bringing into the U.S. I said no and they left.

1985 Viral Disease, Not a Gay Disease

The Museum of Health and Medical Science in Houston has an exhibit on the history of HIV/AIDS. The quote has been there for many years. It is taken from a speech I gave in 1985.

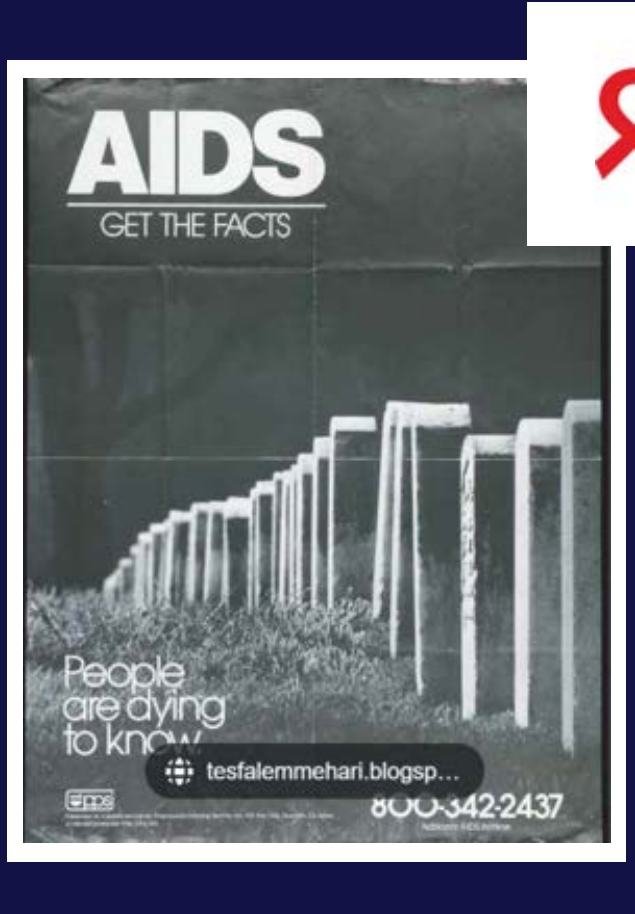
"People need to be aware that this is a disease that affects everyone in society. The virus doesn't care if you are male or female. We need to educate the public that it's a viral disease, not a gay disease."

Dr. Gordon E. Crofoot

HIV/AI
1980s-Pres
THE OH PROJECT

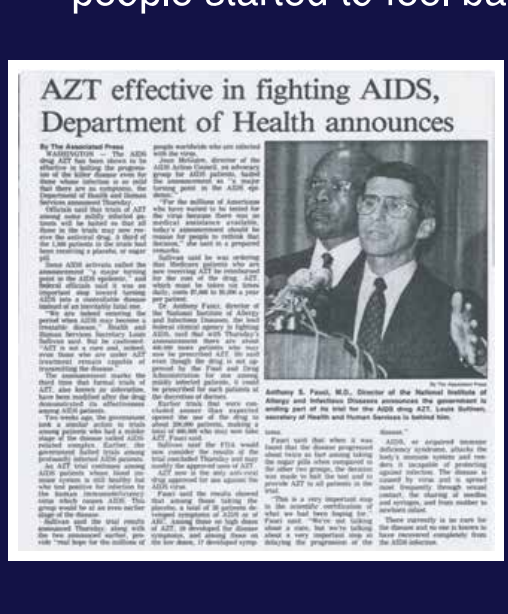
First Major World AIDS Conference 1986

In June, I went to the 2nd International AIDS Conference in Paris, France. I arrived just as the meetings were starting. It was so interesting, I did not even have much time to eat or change money. I had just enough money to get a subway after midnight back to my hotel. I waited for a train, but the lights were turned off and the gates were locked. Subway closes at 1:00am. I set off an alarm and the police let me out muttering, "stupid American." But that first major conference was amazing.

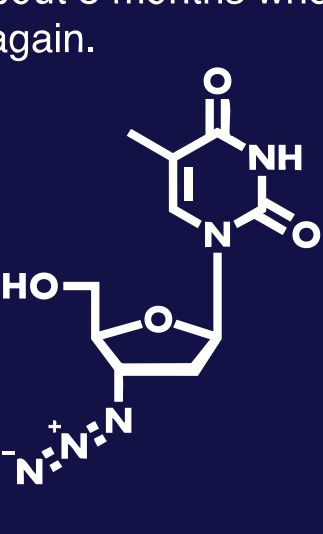


1987 First HIV Drug

AZT or Zidovudine was the first drug approved to treat AIDS. It was created decades earlier as a cancer treatment, but was shelved because it proved to be ineffective and had too many side effects. It was felt that it had to be taken exactly every 4 hours and people used beepers to remind them it was time to take AZT. Viral load was not available yet, but AZT used as single drug seemed to work for about 5 months when people started to feel bad again.



AZT effective in fighting AIDS, Department of Health announces



Ted Koppel Nightline News 1987

Ted Koppel, the iconic host of Nightline News, reached over 25 million Americans five nights a week. On June 5, 1987, he hosted a historic three-hour National Town Hall On AIDS—the first major U.S. news broadcast to tackle the crisis head-on.

At a time when no FDA-approved treatments existed, desperation pushed many to seek hope beyond U.S. borders. As a nationally recognized AIDS specialist, I was invited to discuss the harsh reality of the epidemic and the forbidden treatments emerging overseas—drugs that offered hope but remained illegal in America. It was a pivotal moment when the world could no longer turn away.

1989 Houston Conference on AIDS

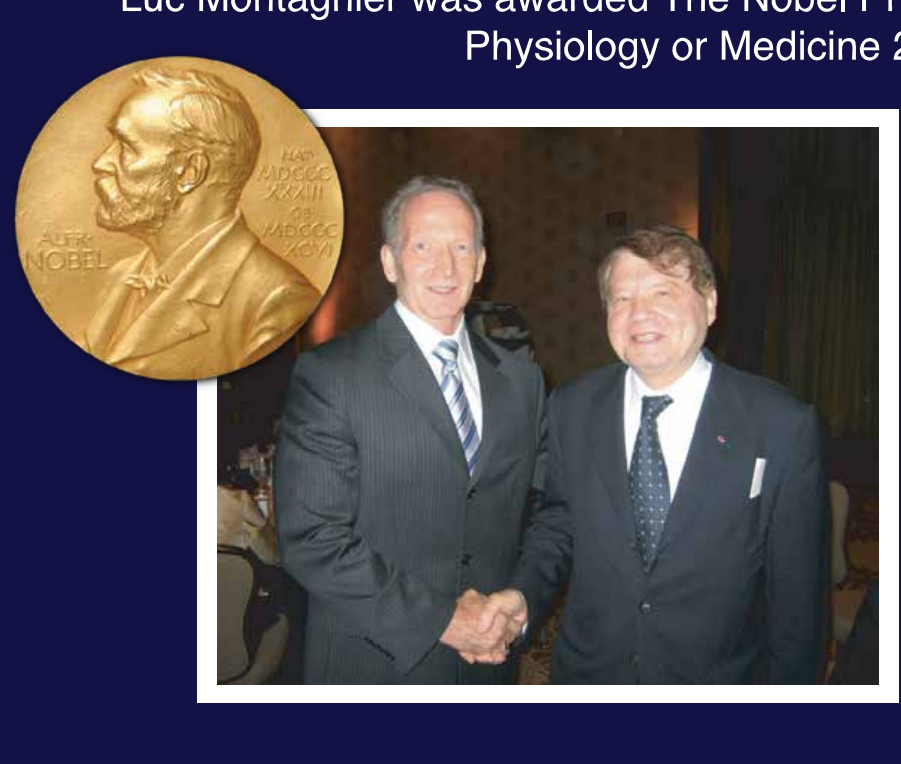
The Annual Houston Conference on AIDS in America was launched in May 1989 to keep Houston's AIDS community engaged and informed about the national AIDS landscape. Organized by Houston physicians—Adan Rios (Director), Gordon Crofoot (Co-Director), Gary Brewton, Benjamin Valfre, and Jorge Quesada—the conference aimed to unite experts, advocates, and healthcare professionals in a collaborative environment to develop new strategies against the AIDS epidemic. At that time, the Texas Department of Health estimated that 100,000 Texans were infected with HIV. As we sought to translate this statistic into its profound human, social, and economic impact on Texas and society as a whole, the magnitude of the AIDS crisis became painfully evident.

The conference was held annually for eight consecutive years, with no limitations in our efforts to assemble a distinguished faculty each year to share knowledge, foster innovation, and advance the fight against AIDS. Dr. Luc Montagnier opened the first and Dr. Paul Volberding the last.

89 First Annual Houston Conference on AIDS in America
94 Sixth Annual Houston Conference on AIDS in America

Dr. Luc Montagnier 1989

On May 11, Dr. Luc Montagnier, the man who discovered the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), we invited him to come to Houston and inaugurate the first annual Houston Conference on AIDS in America. Dr. Montagnier, to the surprise of many, was aware of Houston's AIDS problems and was concerned about them. I spoke about an update on HIV care and Dr. Montagnier spoke about discovering the virus and developing a blood test for it. Luc Montagnier was awarded The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2008.



1990-2004 University of Houston Lecture

From 1990 to 2004, I delivered a standing-room-only guest lecture every other year to nearly 240 postdoctoral students on the evolving landscape of AIDS—covering the latest science, treatments, and ethical challenges. But the day I gave my final lecture, I was told my building would no longer lease to me because I treated people with HIV—they didn't want "those patients" in their space. The students were ready to protest. Instead, I proposed a better solution: I organized an educational conference for the building's owners and staff. They listened, they learned—and they changed their minds. I've been in that same building ever since, now 21 years and counting, with unwavering support from everyone around me.

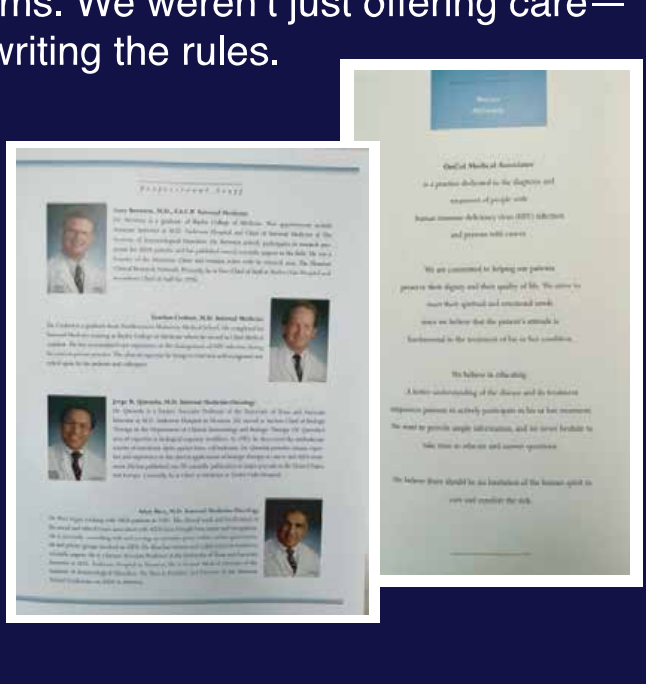
HIV & Vaccines 1991

I was coauthor of the first published abstract using my patients to show how HIV positive patients antibodies reacted to vaccinations at different T4 cell counts.

Antibody to Capsular Polysaccharides of Streptococcus pneumoniae after Vaccination of Human Immunodeficiency Virus-Infected Subjects with 23-Valent Pneumococcal Vaccine
Maria C. Rodriguez-Barradas, Daniel M. Musher, **Gordon Crofoot**, Christopher J. Lahart, Christine E. Lacke, Jean E. Groover
The Journal of Infectious Diseases 1992-03-01

1992 OnCol Center

In 1992, we launched something bold and ahead of its time—a new clinic, an international pharmacy, and Oncol, one of the very first medical clinics with out-of-hospital infusion centers. We were breaking new ground, and the system wasn't ready. Insurance companies didn't even know how to process outpatient infusion claims. We weren't just offering care—we were rewriting the rules.



Top Doc 1992

I was named by Metropolitan Magazine as the best AIDS doctor in Harris county.

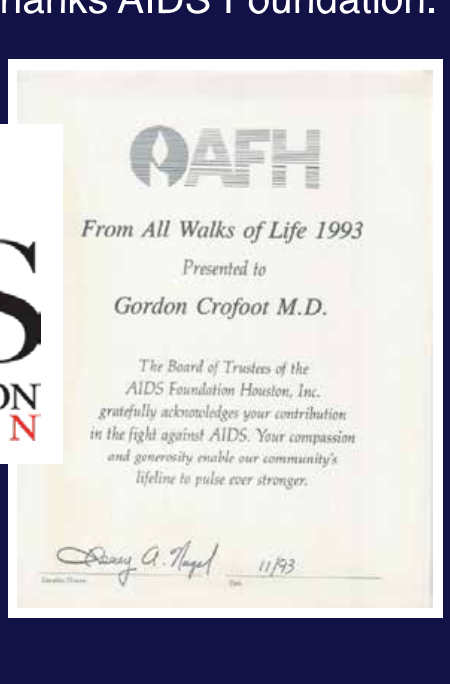
BEST HAPPY-HOUR BITES • NEW LOOKS IN EXECUTIVE FASHION
Houston Metropolitan
NURSES RATE THE DOCTORS
YOUR GUIDE TO HOUSTON'S TOP M.D.s

1992 Leave the Hospital... No AIDS Here

Our clinic was compelled to depart from a large Baptist hospital in Houston after we began admitting individuals with AIDS. The hospital was concerned that patients would be deterred from seeking admission to a facility with AIDS patients. However, one day later, we were allocated the entire top floor of Twelve Oaks Hospital to establish our dedicated HIV hospital unit.

AIDS Foundation Houston 1993

Thanks AIDS Foundation.



AFH

From All Walks of Life 1993

Presented to

Gordon Crofoot M.D.

The Board of Trustees of the AIDS Foundation Houston, Inc. gratefully acknowledges your contribution in the fight against AIDS. Your compassion and generosity enable our community's lifeline to value ever stronger.

1997 Humanitarian Award

I was awarded HGLPC's Humanitarian Award for *Lifework Exhibiting A Compassion Concern For The Dignity And Equality Of Humankind.*

Montrose Clinic 1998

Dr. Crofoot became Medical Director of Montrose Clinic 501c3 (now Legacy Community Health Services). Dr. Crofoot helped to develop the Ryan White, Title 1, HIV treatment program for people infected with HIV without insurance and to promote the Safe Sex educational program. In 2005, the Montrose Clinic moved and evolved into the Legacy Community Health Center.

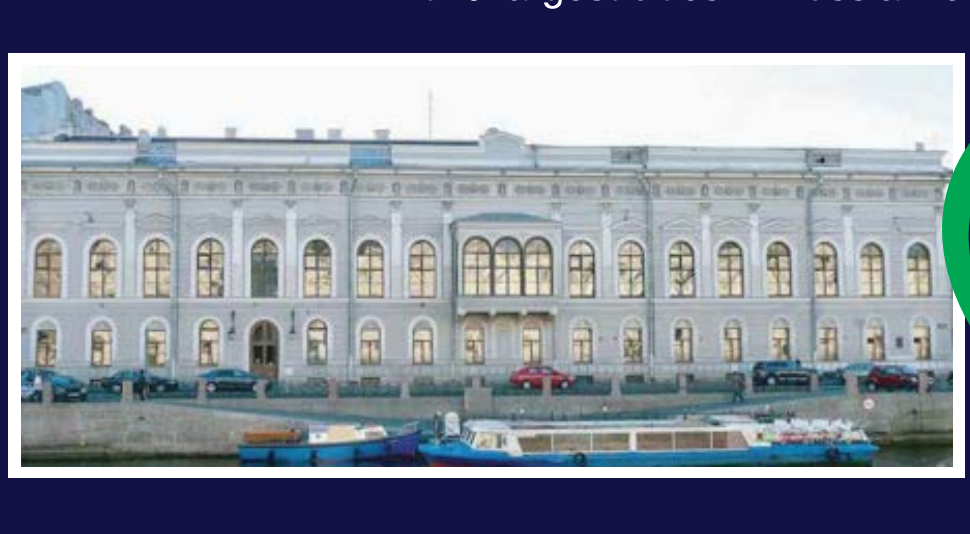
1998 Russia... Come Back Tomorrow

U.S. passports were not sufficient for travel to Russia; they required a special visa filled out in Cyrillic script. I couldn't read the visa, and no one at the airline could either. As I was disembarking the plane in St. Petersburg, Russia someone asked for my visa. After examining it, he said, "You are here one day early...come back tomorrow!

While I was stunned and not moving, I noticed people waiting on the other side of customs. It turned out that all 20 U.S. physicians had the wrong date on their Russian visas. We were taken into a special room where they presented us with a letter that had been stamped about 15 times, allowing us to pass. It was a bit scary to arrive in Russia and be told to come back tomorrow.

First Data from Russia 2000

The first international conference in Russia was held in November 2000 at the Shuvalov Palace in St. Petersburg. This was the first conference ever to present HIV/AIDS data and incidence rates from St. Petersburg and Moscow. I was one of 20 HIV specialists from the United States invited to attend. There were 350 delegates from all over the world. Faculty members and international opinion leaders presented updates on the immunological and urological aspects of HIV infection, as well as new data on the use of protease inhibitors for treatment. This included discussions on immune reconstitution, protease inhibitor combinations, cross-resistance, and practical issues related to using protease inhibitors in clinical settings. U.S. delegates also met seperately in a special advisory board to provide Glaxo Wellcome with expert input regarding the data presented at this international meeting and its potential impact on U.S. clinical practice at the time. The data shared was particularly interesting, as it was the first time incidence and transmission of HIV from the two largest cities in Russia were presented.

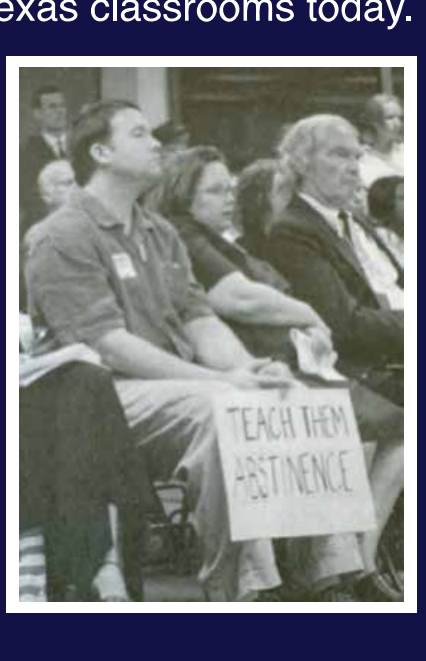


2002 Magic Johnson

I have had the opportunity to attend several meetings & dinners with Magic Johnson. We are both Michigan State University graduates. In November 1991, Magic Johnson courageously announced that he was HIV positive when his wife was just seven weeks pregnant. Both remain negative. Magic Johnson has dedicated a significant amount of time to meeting with and educating the black community, including multiple visits to Houston. I, too, have been actively involved in providing information and support to the black community. It is crucial to continue raising awareness and 1998 to 2002 offering assistance, especially on important health issues such as HIV/AIDS. Magic Johnson's efforts have been instrumental in reducing stigma and increasing understanding about the disease. I am committed to contributing to these efforts and making a positive impact in the communities we serve.

"Get Plenty of Rest" to Avoid STDs & Pregnancy 2004

Ten years after the firestorm around the 1994 health textbook adoption, publishers censored almost all information on contraception and sexual orientation in new textbooks they submitted for adoption in 2004. One textbook, for example, didn't mention condoms at all in a list of eight strategies for avoiding sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Among the strategies that made it in: "Get plenty of rest. When you're tired, it's hard to think clearly." Another textbook actually identified using condoms as a high-risk behavior. Such passges discourage the use of condoms even though research has shown that, if used correctly and consistently, they are effective in preventing the sexual transmission of HIV and other STIs as well as unintended pregnancy. Under the pressure social conservatives on and off the State Board of Education, publishers also agreed that thie textbooks would define and present marriage as only a union of one man and one woman. Some board members also demanded that the textbooks include information disparaging homosexuality and describing gay people as "more prone to self-destructive behaviors like depression, illegal drug use, and suicide. Publishers resisted this latter demand. On the other hand, the textbooks were virtually silent on the topics of sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. Those textbooks remain in Texas classrooms today.



2005 Abstinence in School Books

Dr. Crofoot, working with the Texas Freedom Foundation in Austin, Texas, testified before the Texas State Board of Education against the "abstinence-only policies" in the public school system and new textbooks. I presented information regarding the sexual activities of young adults and emphasized the need for educational programs focused on the prevention of STDs, teen pregnancies, and HIV transmission. The room was filled with clergy and religious individuals who argued against my position, and ultimately, no changes were made. I was quoted as saying that "distributing four-leaf clovers would be more beneficial than the textbooks in use" As I was leaving the building, a sudden gust of wind caused a branch to fall and scratch my forehead. I need to be careful not to upset the religious clergy in Texas!

Campeche Medical School Lecture 2006

Dr. Crofoot presented the first HIV/AIDS conference ever held in Campeche, Mexico, at the Campeche Medical School. They kept me for three hours, and still did not want to stop. This was the first time the medical students had anyone to ask questions about HIV. The press and politicians quickly arrived to monitor the discussion and asked questions as well.

AUTONOMA DE CAMPECHE
FACULTAD DE MEDICINA
Campeche Newspaper Mexico May 2006

2006 Who is that Santa Clause?

Gordon Crofoot was Medical Director of the Montrose Clinic, and even sometimes became Santa Claus with Katy Caldwell at Christmas.

Team CrofootMD Timeline

Black Tie Dinner Humanitarian Award 2006

In August, I received the Black Tie Dinner 2006 Humanitarian Award which was given to a local individual for contributions to the LGBT community and was recognized as a pioneer in the treatment and research on HIV and AIDS and has been at the forefront of efforts to find advanced treatments for AIDS and in educating the public about the disease. It was great fun walking around with my award and Leslie Jordan carrying his Emmy Award.

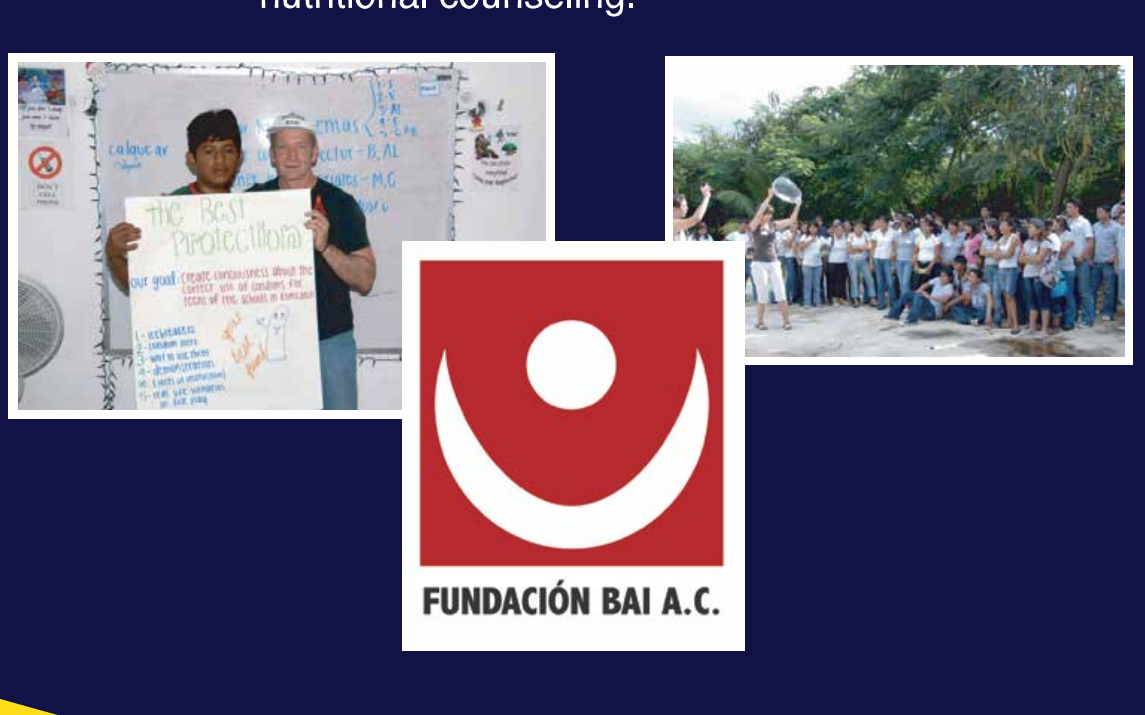
Houston's Black Tie Dinner names 2006 award recipients

2006 Brazos Abiertos 501c3

Brazos Abiertos 501c3 was started in the United States, I was cofounder and Medical Director. Fundacion BAI A.C. was started in Merida, Yucatan. The initial funding, organization and education came from Brazos Abiertos. Dr. Carlos Cabrero was trained in my office by me and became Medical Director of Fundacion BAI. He now oversees most programs in Yucatan and is very well known for his HIV work in all of Mexico. Brazos Abiertos mission statemen was to teach the people of Yucatan, Mexico how to react to HIV/AIDS. That mission I am proud to say has been met. The mission of Fundacion BAI is now" Working to prevent the spread of HIV and STIs, and to decrease teenage pregnancies in Yucatán."

Our Initial Goals Were:
Provide education about HIV, STDs, pregnancy, and gender understanding through 3-5 day programs in Secondary & Preparatory Schools. These programs were developed by US students. We quickly learned that Mayan kids do not sit in a classroom, so new interactive teaching methods and games were developed.

Then we started HIV testing clinics, which included a very open pretest educational talk, open testing, and a discreet post-result consultation and education session. We conducted the first HIV testing program ever held in a Mayan Village. Develop post-test care programs. Brazos Abiertos Initiative (BAI) fosters an ongoing relationship with all HIV-positive clients. We are proud to assist all clients in finding appropriate care after their diagnosis and offer free psychotherapy and nutritional counseling.

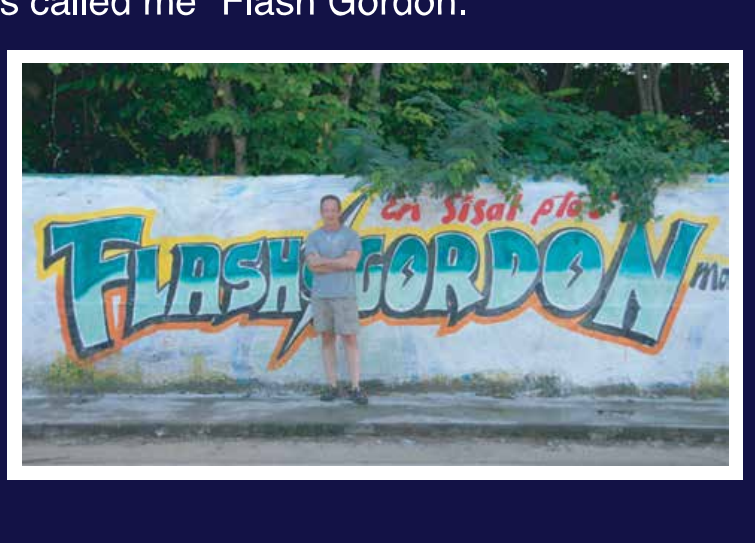

FUNDACIÓN BAI A.C.

Mayan Kids do not Sit in a Classroom 2006

The HIV game was developed to show kids what is happening when HIV infects someone and how HIV meds work. Everyone played a part. Here I am with my antiviral meds ready to save a patient infected. The kids love this game and we have won awards for developing it.

2006 My Fond Nickname

Mayan kids called me "Flash Gordon."



First HIV Testing Program in a Mayan Village 2006

The first-ever HIV testing program in a Mayan village took place in Hunucmá, Yucatán. The village mayor faced a moral crisis after reports surfaced that local youths had posted pornographic videos on YouTube, sparking concern among the townspeople. Having heard of our organization, the mayor reached out to us for assistance.

In response, we agreed to provide anatomy and sex education classes at the local school attended by the youths involved. Following these educational sessions, we implemented an HIV testing program to address pressing public health concerns within the community.

The HIV testing program followed an open model in the town square. Pre-test counseling was conducted in small groups of 8–12 people. We used a new one-minute fingerstick test, which quickly became a point of fascination for the youth, who enjoyed watching the testing process.

Post-test counseling and results were delivered one-on-one, discreetly blending into the crowd in the town square to maintain privacy. The program was enthusiastically received, marking a historic moment as the first-ever HIV testing event in a Mayan village.

2006 Sec of Health, Yucatan Wanted Us

This was our first meeting with the Secretary of Health of Yucatan, Mexico, José Ángel Córdova Villalobos and Centro Nacional para la Prevención y Control del VIH y el sida(CENSIDA) Dr. Jorge Saavedra, MD .MPH MSC. This first meeting led to the development of Brazos Abiertos 501c3. Our nonprofit teaching about HIV and starting HIV testing and treatment in the Mayan villages in Yucatan.

New News from the President 2006

President of Mexico, Felipe de Jesus Calderon, gave a promising keynote speech discussing the improvement of programs and the situation for AIDS patients and individuals infected with HIV. He also announced a policy change that no longer required drug companies from outside of Mexico to have a manufacturing facility in Mexico to sell their drugs. They would now be permitted to open an office or partner with a Mexican company to import their drugs into Mexico. This decision provided earlier access to new HIV medications, eliminating the years-long wait for a new drug to be used in Mexico.

I am aware that sometimes things are done just for show. Mexico spent a million dollars to HIV test every pregnant woman in villages. This initiative was carried out and presented at the AIDS conference. However, there were no provisions in place to provide adequate healthcare for women who tested positive. As a result, many children were born HIV positive without access to necessary healthcare. Sadly, children with HIV were often ostracized from their families and homes, like the little girl whose picture I took in 2006.

2008 First Time South of United States

The XVII International AIDS Conference took place in Mexico City from August 3 to 8, 2008. Approximately 22,000 participants, gathered to assess progress in the global response to AIDS. The conference emphasized the importance of "knowing your epidemic and knowing your response" and called for renewed commitment to strengthening HIV prevention, treatment, care, and support programs worldwide. It was the first AIDS conference held in Latin America, and discussions covered topics such as antiretroviral treatment, combating stigma, and finding an HIV vaccine.

AIDS 2008
XVII INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE
Mexico City, 3-8 August

Houston Chronicle 2008

On August 11, an article was written by Betty Martin and published in The Houston Chronicle entitled, "Mexico Mission Saving Lives, Changing Attitudes," which talked about my AIDS work in the U.S. and Mexico.

Mission saving lives, changing attitudes

2008 Loved the Global Village

Our nonprofit kids from the U.S. and Mexico put together a great global village booth and we were able to talk to people from all over the world. So much fun and educational!

Mexico was thrilled to host the AIDS conference in Mexico City in 2008, marking the first time this conference was held south of the U.S. border. The country aimed to demonstrate that Mexico was as advanced in its approach to AIDS as other financially developed nations.

Two years prior to the conference, Mexico instructed all 32 states to take action on AIDS within their respective regions. Yucatan, which had not previously addressed the issue extensively, was aware of our efforts. We had a meeting with the Minister of Health for Yucatan and the entire office team. During the meeting, we presented our proposed programs and offered to involve thei office, allowing them to take credit for the initiatives. They agreed, enabling us to commerce educational programs in schools and implement HIV testing initiatives for the first time.

Do Not Introduce Your Husband 2008

I was at the conference with Dr. Carlos Cabrera, who is the medical director of our Mexico nonprofit organization Fundacion BAI AC, and also with Dr. Jorge Saavedra, MD, MPH, MSC. At that time, Dr. Saavedra was the director of CENSIDA, Mexico's National AIDS program. Dr. Saavedra delivered a significant speech about the AIDS/SIDA situation in Mexico, but he faced backlash because he mentioned and introduced his husband. Dr. Saavedra was fired 2 months later by the President of Mexico.

www.aids2008.org

Felipe Calderon, President of Mexico

2010 Digital Game for Mayan Kids

Dr. La Verne Abe Harris, along with digital graphic technology students from Purdue University, collaborated to create a new game specifically designed for Mayan Village children in our Brazos Abierto Yucatan non-profit organization. The game allows children to be the best Mayan warrior, earn points, and learn about STDs and HIV infection. This innovative approach was a huge success with the kids, engaging them in an educational and interactive manner. So much fun!!

Yes!! HIV+ Men Can Have Kids 2011

The news from Mexico reported the first successful case in the Yucatan of an HIV-positive man fathering an HIV-negtaive child. His wife was HIV-negative, and he was consistently undetectable. They inquired about the possibility of having children. It was a very exciting moment. I met with them, counseled them, and assisted in planning the pregnancy. It was a carefully planned process that resulted in a perfect outcome - a son who was the first of their three children.

2011 HIV Neg or Pos???

Many HIV testing programs have been organized following our initial Mayan village testing. All our HIV testing programs are conducted in a very open model, typically in the center of the town square. The pre-test counseling involves a circle of 10-15 people discussing what HIV testing entails and how it is carried out. A wealth of information about HIV is shared during this session.

The testing itself is conducted on an open table by Mexico credentialed testers, often with a large number of young school children gathered around to observe. The testing is done anonymously, and the post-test counseling is conducted one-on-one with a counselor. The counselor takes the individual who has recently been tested to a busy town square and sits down to discuss the test results. We refer to this as "hiding in a crowd."

Individuals who test positive receive extended counseling and are promptly referred to our HIV treatment programs. While we do encounter positive results in our testing program, the highest number of positives are typically seen in the Merida, Yucatan Zocalo on Friday nights at midnight. During this time, many young men are offering their sexual services for money, which they plan to use for a nice dinner with their girlfriends on.

Two Companies... More Work 2011

The research was separated into a new corporation called The Crofoot Research Center, but is still part of CrofootMD.

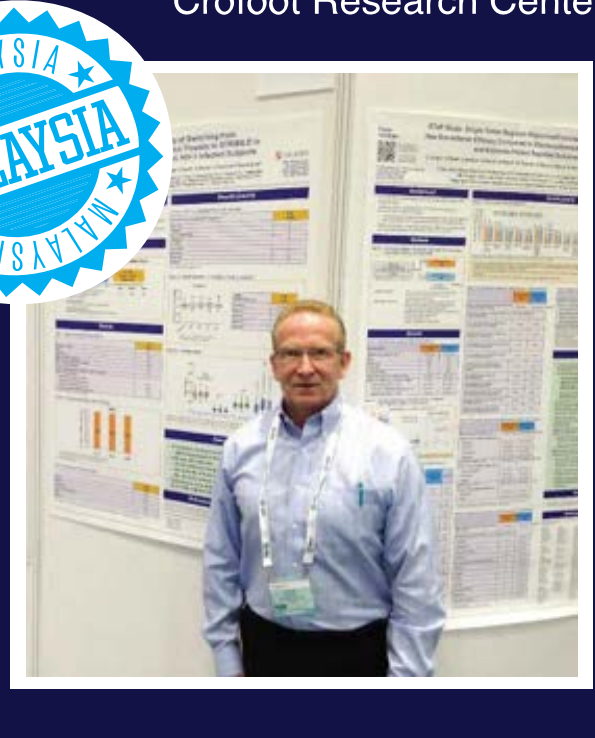
Crofoot MD
CLINIC AND RESEARCH CENTER

2012 U = U for Real

I was speaking at a conference near Cozumel, Mexico to a large group of HIV medical specialist on what was at that time a new concept U = U. Great location and a lot of fun with my friend and coordinator of the conference, Dr Carlos Cabrera.

IAS 2013 Conference in Malaysia 2013

IAS 2013, the 7th IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention, was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 30 June to 3 July 2013. I am an author and presenting the Poster. The research was done at The Crofoot Research Center, Inc.



2014 London Pride

Having a great time with some new friends on Pride Day in London. I also met with the London AIDS Foundation and learned how other countries set up their education, testing & treatment programs.

Pride Day London

Biktarvy Given to First Human in the World 2015

We conducted the first proof of concept research protocol for Biktarvy and we were the high enroller in the first protocol. I am a coauthor on the first published paper. We gave the first dose of Biktarvy to the first person in the world. The study was double blinded, meaning we did not know what medicine each patient was taking. After 2 years, the blind was broken and we found out that I had given the first Biktarvy in the world to a human. Nine years later, he is still taking Biktarvy. Biktarvy is the #1 treatment prescribed in the U.S. for HIV infection.

BIKTARVY®
bictegravir 50mg/emtricitabine 200mg/ tenofovir alafenamide 25mg tablets

2015 First Marriage in Yucatan - We Are

Alexei and I were married in the U.S. in 2012. On July 15, 2015, we were surprised to become the first same-sex couple to marry in Yucatán, Mexico, without a court order. We went to the courthouse with our lawyer, fully expecting to be rejected. To our surprise, they were ready to issue our marriage license.

However, there was an issue—Alexei's birth certificate had no country of birth listed. Fortunately, his paper birth certificate was stored in the same courthouse, and a kind Mayan clerk located it. She reissued the document, officially listing Mexico as his country of birth. With that resolved, we were legally married in Mexico.

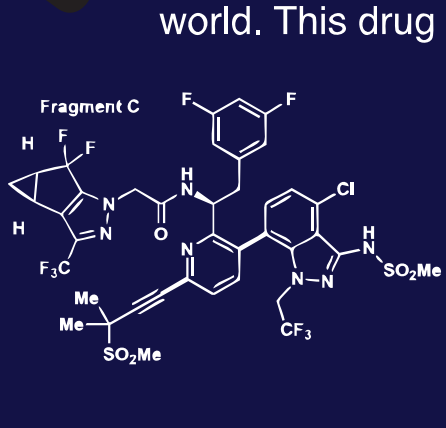
OutSpoken 2015

OutSpoken was a group of individuals, typically HIV positive, who gathered monthly at a restaurant with a guest speaker to openly discuss various topics related to living with HIV, including relationships, medication management, and overall well-being. This program was established and overseen by CrofootMD and sponsored by Gilead Sciences. Additionally, members of the group often organized and participated in various social activities outside of the monthly meetings. OutSpoken maintained its own Facebook page through which medical questions and concerns were addressed by me, providing support and information to the community as needed.

WALK
#TEAMOUTSPOKEN
GORDON F CROFOOT MD PA
GILEAD

2015 First Capsid Inhibitor

We were the highest enroller in the FDA phase 1b pharmacodynamic protocol for Gilead's new molecule in a new class of HIV treatment called a capsid inhibitor. We administered the first injection of this drug to a human with HIV in the world. This drug is now called Lenacapavir.



CrofootMD
The MOSAICO Study
HIV VACCINE STUDY ADVISORY BOARD

Yucatan TV Interview 2016

Brazos Abiertos Inc. goals were to decrease the spread of HIV, sexually transmitted diseases, and teen pregnancies in Yucatan, Mexico. As a founder of this nonprofit, I was honored at our Merida Showcase of Home Tour to be interviewed by Telemar TV. What a great fundraiser on a beautiful day in Merida.

2017 Greg Louganis

I had a great time talking with Greg Louganis at the AIDS foundation of Houston's World AIDS Day luncheon today. Greg is an athlete, actor, dancer, and model and his is considered the greatest diver in history with 4 Olympic Gold medal performances in 1984 and 1988. As the featured speaker at today's fundraiser, Greg described his experience in 1988 when he hit his head on the diving board resulting in a concussion, multiple stitches and 30 minutes later by a near perfect dive and a gold medal. A few weeks later, he disclosed to the world his HIV positive status. As I listened to Greg tell the stories about stigma, emotions, discrimination, and side effects of the early HIV drugs, it brought back many memories of the stories involving lives and deaths of the thousands of patients of patients I have cared for with HIV over the past 38 years. Greg Louganis is an amazing person and a great example of how far we have come with the science of this disease and the stigma associated with it. We have come a long way since 1988, but we have a long way to go. I applaud and thank everyone involved with this journey. Keep up the good work.

WORLD AIDS DAY

HIV Testing at a Catholic School - Sure 2018

In February, I was invited by the mayor of Merida, Yucatan, to speak about HIV/AIDS to approximately 200 medical and dental students at the Universidad del Mayab. The university is a private institution of higher education in Merida, Yucatan, Mexico, affiliated with the religious congregation of the Legion of Christ. The organizers requested that the presentation be conducted in English. It was a wonderful experience, and the mayor's wife was in attendance and presented me with a lovely painting.

During the presentation, I mentioned that whenever we give speeches, we also conduct HIV testing programs. Initially, I was informed that this Catholic school would never agree to such testing. Nevertheless, they surprised me by participating in the testing, and the students had a great time assisting with the tests. They were curious and engaged, asking many questions that were enjoyable to answer.

2019 J&J HIV Vaccine

In November, congratulations Team CrofootMD Research for being the first of 16 worldwide sites conducting Johnson & Johnson's new HIV vaccine research study to be authorized to start screening patients. I am proud to say we enrolled the first patient in the world.

Walgreens Joins Team CrofootMD 2020

In February, Walgreens Specialty Pharmacy opened at the CrofootMD clinic to better serve our patients' pharmaceutical needs. This marks the first Walgreens location within a private clinic in Texas. The team of CrofootMD Walgreens pharmacists goes above and beyond to assist our patients, even handling prior authorizations and coordinating multiple medications so that you can pick them up all at once, rather than receiving one prescription every four days each month. Additionally, overnight FedEx shipping is provided free of charge. What a fabulous pharmacy and staff!

Opening
GORDON E. CROFOOT MD PA

2020 Of Course, We do the First Covid Testing!

In April, because of the limited access to Covid testing, the real number of infections are many times greater than the numbers recorded. Asymptomatic infections are unknown and are up to now ignored. Team CrofootMD is here for our community by supporting and treating many people infected and counseling those those uninfected to stay healthy and safe. We are testing symptomatic and asymptomatic people for COVID-19 and starting Monday, April 27, 2020, we will be using LabCorp's new and more accurate COVID-19 antibody test. These tests have a per day limit so call to schedule testing. Thanks to the fabulous Team CrofootMD staff.

Crofoot

NEWLY ADDED COVID-19 TESTING CENTER!

CALL TO SCHEDULE YOUR TEST!

At my Young Age, Two Sons 2020

One of the greatest moments of my life was the birth of our first son, Ian Oliver Crofoot, on April 26, 2020, at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. He was born at Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital. Our surrogate was the first to be for Covid upon admission for delivery, and both Alexei and I were allowed in the delivery room. I was overjoyed to welcome my son into the world by delivering him, and two years later, I also delivered our second son, Aiden James Crofoot, on Halloween 2021.

2020 Ending the Epidemic

Dr. Gordon Crofoot leads a new HIV vaccine trial from his research center in Montrose, as reported in OutSmart Magazine in February 2020.

Ending the Epidemic

Out Smart
Houston's LGBTQ Magazine

Walgreens Largest Vaccine Program Ever!! 2021

On February 11, our office was an approved Texas site for administering the COVID-19 vaccine, but we had not received any supply until the severe freeze on February 11, 2021. At that time, the state had vaccine doses allocated for Houston, but the usual distribution sites lacked working freezers due to the power outage. Although our building had no power, our freezers remained operational thanks to our emergency generator. We accepted the vaccines and, in collaboration with Walgreens, quickly organized a free vaccination program in just two days. Using Walgreens' online scheduling system, 500 appointments were booked in just seven minutes. On Sunday, February 14, we successfully vaccinated 560 people in an outdoor clinic, executing the program flawlessly. This became the largest vaccine program ever conducted by a Walgreens Pharmacy.

2021 Covid-19 Drug Approved Because of Us

Congratulations Team CrofootMD, "it's a game changer" Merck announced that it's soon to be approved new anti-COVID-19 drug, Molnupiravir (MK4482) cut hospitalizations & death in half. The Crofoot Research Center has done research on this drug for the past year .We were coauthor of, Molnupiravir, published in The New England Journal of Medicine before Christmas 2021 and FDA approved 1 week later.

First in the World to Digitally Sign 2021

Veeva SiteVault is company developing digital technologies to help the research industry shift from paper to digital. Team CrofootMD was asked to work with them, which has improved connections between individual physicians in private practices and centers for clinical research, a connection that can also help sponsors with recruitment. Improved and digitized data and document management can only helpthe overall research effort, so that patients can easily participate in clinical studies. In 2021, the Crofoot Research Center became the first clinical research center in the world to digitally consent a patient using Veeva's new technology, which connects sites and patients in one system.

Dr. Crofoot with Veeva SiteVault presented an international webinar to over 2000 people discussing how "digital consents empowers patients at the Crofoot Research Center" and the benefit of digital implantation of research.

SiteVault

INFORMED CONSENT

2021 Nature Magazine on Science

Congratulations Crofoot Research Center on being the highest enroller in the first study and first to inject this new highly potent & long acting (every 6 months) subcutaneous injectable HIV treatment drug called GS6207 in a new class of drugs called Capsid Inhibitors. I am a co-author of this 23 page manuscript describing the science behind & first studies just published in the fabulous Nature Magazine. Long acting agents like GS6207 can provide much needed treatment options for people living with HIV who are heavily treatment experienced & additionally improve adherence. As always, I want to thank my amazing CrofootMD Team.

Nature
International weekly journal of science

nature
International weekly journal of science

Leading "The Walk to End HIV" 2022

On March 6, I was asked along with Mayor Sylvestor Turner to cut the ribbon and start the AIDS Foundation's Walk to End HIV. Team CrofootMD led the walk with 3000 participants following.

WALK TO END HIV
AIDS Walk Houston | 2023

2022 Monkeypox

In June, CrofootMD saw the first 4 cases of Monkeypox in Harris County and we were ready to develop testing, diagnosis, and treatment strategies. We were one of the few sites who were authorized to give the research Mpox vaccine and treat with the experimental Tecovirimat (TPOXX).

MONKEYPOX VACCINE
MONKEYPOX VACCINE
MONKEYPOX VACCINE

Xmas Cheer for Team CrofootMD 2022

The fabulous Team CrofootMD wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Our Christmas party with good food & drinks. Look at those spectacular paintings.

2023 New HIV Vaccine???

Unfortunately, the J&J HIV vaccine trial was found to be ineffective, leading to the FDA to halth the trial in April 2023. New concepts for HIV vaccines are currently being explored. A month later, a vaccine conference was held in Washington, DC, and I was invited to attend. Dr. Anthony Fauci and around 700 top scientists were also in attendance.

The scientific discussions were truly amazing and I was overwhelmed by the fantastic studies presented. It appears that the next major HIV vaccine trial will involve a combination of three bNAbs (broadly neutralizing antibodies) or three super antibodies. This approach is being considered by the HVTN (HIV Vaccine Trials Network).

HIV VACCINE TRIALS NETWORK

HVTN 2023
FULL GROUP MEETING

OUR GOAL
A Safe and Effective Vaccine
The HVTN's mission is to fully characterize the safety, immunogenicity, and efficacy of HIV vaccine candidates with the goal of developing a safe, effective vaccine as rapidly as possible for prevention of HIV globally.

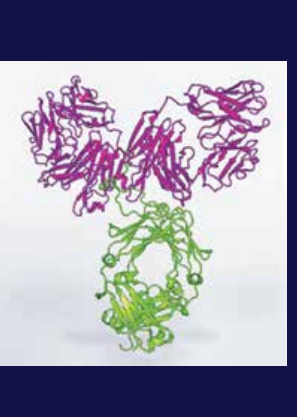
Opt2Care is our New Nonprofit 2024

Opt2Care is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization steadfastly committed to enhancing healthcare access for Houston's underserved LGBTQIA+ communities, embracing every individual across the spectrum of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. Our mission is to deliver equitable and compassionate care, specializing in free or low-cost services focused on preventive care, chronic disease management, and health education. We ensure that all individuals receive the quality healthcare they deserve, and providing services to every color of the rainbow.

Opt2Care
Houston's LGBTQIA+ Community Health Care

2024 bNAb

Broadly Neutralizing Antibodies or Super Antibodies
- Possible Vaccines
- Treatment of HIV Infection
- Potential Cure



We are Working with Super Antibodies 2024

A new treatment concept for individuals infected with HIV involves combining an anti-HIV drug with monoclonal antibodies. The first trial of this approach was published in Lancet HIV in January 2024. The research was conducted at The Crofoot Research Center, and I am one of the authors of the manuscript. CrofootMD is one of the world's leaders in monoclonal antibody research.

THE LANCET
HIV

2024 Lenacapavir: A New Era in HIV Prevention

Twice-yearly subcutaneous Lenacapavir prevented 99.9% of HIV transmissions in clinical trials - ushering in a bold new chapter for PrEP.

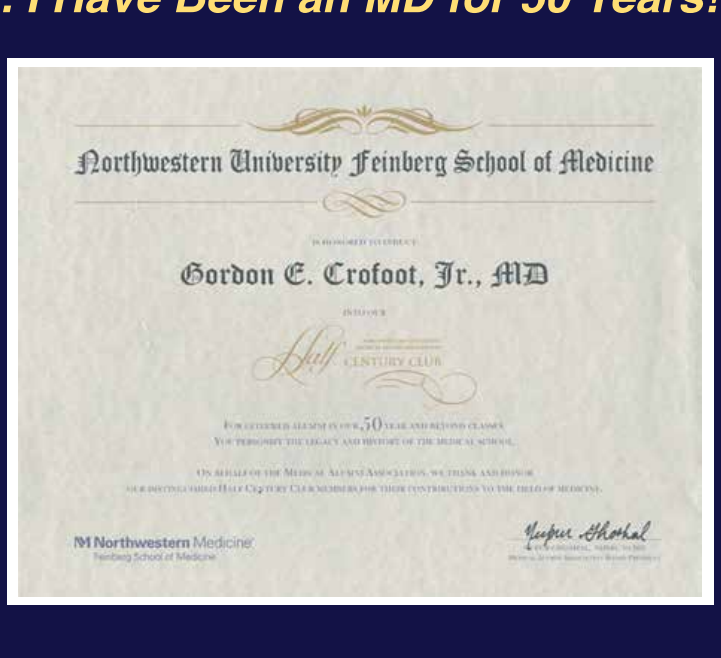
Dr. Gordon Crofoot gave the first-ever dose of Lenacapavir to a human seven years ago in the initial pilot study. Today, the Crofoot Research Center is proud to have been a top-enrolling U.S. site in the pivotal PrEP global trial.

Dr. Crofoot co-authored the first abstract presented at IDWeek 2024 and the landmark New England Journal of Medicine publication on November 28, 2024.

Science Magazine named Lenacapavir the 2024 Scientific Breakthrough of the Year - a game changer in HIV prevention, now becoming reality.

Science
2024

WOW... I Have Been an MD for 50 Years!


Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine

Gordon E. Crofoot, Jr., MD

Wellness Matrix 2025 2025

Your Personalized Path to Health & Longevity
A new program developed by CrofootMD where you can: Imagine a future where you stay ahead of illness instead of reacting to it. Wellness Matrix if your ultimate health guardian combining cutting-edge medical technology, advanced screenings, and AI-driven analytics to predict, prevent, and personalize your healthcare journey. With our proactive, science-backed approach, you can take charge of your health today - because prevention is the key to a longer, healthier life!

CrofootMD Wellness Matrix

2024 Thank You OutSmart Readers

Thank you OutSmart readers for voting our Team. We love our community. Congratulations Team Crofoot, you are all amazing.

CrofootMD
THANK YOU HOUSTON

Team CrofootMD Timeline

2025 *One Shot. Once a Year. Almost a Vaccine.*

The Crofoot Research Center is proud to be the first site in the world to launch Gilead’s groundbreaking study of once-a-year Lenacapavir injections for HIV prevention.

Within the first 10 days, we screened 9 participants and gave the first two injections in the world—marking a historic moment in HIV research.

This study is testing a powerful new option: just one intramuscular injection per year to prevent HIV. No daily pills. No monthly refills. May be 100% effective. A single shot that could transform prevention —especially for those who need simple, discreet, long-acting protection.

We're honored to lead this next chapter in the fight against HIV.