

Nope, Magic Johnson Has Not Been Cured of HIV

New falsehoods claim that Dr. Sebi cured Magic Johnson of HIV. The truth is the basketball icon is thriving with the virus. Here's how.

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Once again false rumors about a cured [Magic Johnson](#) are gaining traction on social media. To be absolutely clear, the truth is that sports icon Magic Johnson has not been [cured](#) of [HIV](#). In fact, 2024 will mark his 33rd year of living, and thriving, with HIV, the virus that can cause AIDS.

The basketball great has been the topic of conspiracy theories since he shocked the world by disclosing his HIV-positive status on November 7, 1991, at the height of his Lakers fame and at a time when HIV was widely considered a death sentence; effective HIV treatment didn't become available until 1996.

You can watch the historic 1991 announcement [here](#):

The latest falsehoods involve videos on social media claiming that a healer, Dr. Sebi, had cured Johnson using natural remedies. In debunking the claims, [USA Today reports](#) that the healer's real name was Alfredo Bowman. He died in 2016 while serving time in prison for fraud; he had also been charged, in 1987, with practicing medicine without a license. Perhaps Bowman's name has resurfaced because he had proclaimed to have cured other diseases using natural remedies and once maintained a clientele of celebrities, including Michael Jackson and Lisa "Left Eye" Lopez of TLC.

It's frustrating that rumors about Magic Johnson continue to surface. He and his wife, Cookie, have been vocal and public in their efforts to raise awareness about the facts of HIV. In September, [both were honored at the Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation's annual ball](#) (see the photo at the top of this article).

Johnson openly credits HIV meds for keeping him healthy. In a September [interview with Variety](#), he noted that "there are a lot of people living healthy lives now who got diagnosed just like me, 30 years ago 40 years ago, 20 years ago. That couldn't happen back then because we didn't have the drugs. We didn't have the information on how to be here for a long time. A lot has changed for the good."

This doesn't mean that no one has ever been [cured of HIV](#). Indeed, a handful of people have been. But those cases are rare and usually involve people living with HIV who were also diagnosed with leukemia, a blood cancer. In these instances, people received a specific type of stem cell transplant that treated the cancer and also cured their HIV. [Timothy Ray Brown \(the Berlin Patient\)](#) was the first person cured of HIV. He went public about his cure in a June 2011 profile in POZ. Sadly, he died in 2020 at age 54 after his leukemia returned.

Nowadays, people who contract HIV can take [antiretroviral medications](#) to maintain viral suppression. This means they experience slower disease progression, enjoy better overall health and are less likely to develop opportunistic illnesses. What's more, people with an undetectable viral load don't transmit HIV to others through sex dubbed treatment as prevention or [Undetectable Equals Untransmittable](#), or U=U. To learn more, see the [POZ Basics on HIV and AIDS](#).