

# 318K HIV-Positive Russians Have Died Since 1987 – Watchdog

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Dmitry Yermakov / Moskva news Agency

The HIV epidemic has led to the deaths of an estimated 318,000 Russians since the first case was registered in 1987, or 10,000 every year, the country’s national consumer watchdog has said.

The World Health Organization [warned](#) last year that Russia risked developing an out-of-control HIV epidemic after data showed a record number of new cases in 2017. Official data says total HIV cases top 1.2 million in Russia, though experts say this is likely an understatement.

**Related article:** [Russia Risks HIV Epidemic as Cases Rise, Experts Warn](#)

“More than 318,000 HIV-positive people have died since HIV infections started being registered [in 1987],” the Federal Consumer Protection Service, Rospotrebnadzor, [told](#) the state-run TASS news agency on Sunday.

Rospotrebnadzor said 57.5 percent of all HIV-positive cases were transmitted sexually and 39 percent through drug use. Infections were prevalent among the 30-44 age group and were widespread in 23 Russian regions, it added.

Almost 37,000 HIV-positive Russians died from various causes in 2018 alone, the watchdog added. Tuberculosis remained the leading cause of death among them, it said.

The disease had spread beyond high-risk groups, Rospotrebnadzor said, echoing [research](#) by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control.

Since the start of the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s, more than 77 million people have become infected with HIV. Almost half of them — 35.4 million — have died from AIDS-related causes.

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