Tuberculosis will eat out your lungs if left untreated. And yet it is both preventable and an under-reported risk for millions of HIV-positive individuals around the world. Delaying treatment just ten weeks can increase mortality risk as much as 31 percent in HIV/AIDS patients who are seriously immunocompromised, yet it is estimated that millions of cases continue to go undetected. And tuberculosis is just one of several comorbid life-threatening conditions that can challenge HIV treatment and survival; others include HIV–associated malignancies, Hepatitis C, Herpes Simplex Virus, malaria, Leishmania, cardiovascular disease, and Trichomonas Vaginalis.

In an effort to reverse these confounding health tragedies – and explore related challenges – the Harvard University Center for AIDS Research (HU CFAR) brought together over 200 researchers on March 27 and 28 for an annual symposium, held at the Ragon Institute of Massachusetts General Hospital, MIT, and Harvard.

The program was organized by Drs. Anne Goldfeld, Wafaie Fawzi, and Rocio Hurtado, with opening comments by HU CFAR Director, Dr. Bruce Walker.

Presentations by approximately 30 speakers addressed issues that included: the clinical landscape of HIV co–infections, new research in laboratory and field models, the role of nutrition, ongoing vaccine challenges, and the effects of under–diagnosis and persistent drug resistance on human lives in poor communities around the world.

A poster session further encouraged informal conversations with investigators at Harvard School of Public Health, Massachusetts General Hospital, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Children's Hospital, Beth–Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Fenway Health, the Ragon Institute, and the New England Primate Research Center.

The event concluded with a panel discussion, moderated by Drs. Jerrold J. Ellner and Sarah Fortune, that invited further research that can fill the knowledge gaps in this area and "change the tide for TB/HIV."

View the full Symposium Program.
Learn more about HU CFAR on Facebook.

Videos of presentations from the Symposium will be available soon at the HU CFAR website.