

# Celebrities who are HIV positive and speaking out about it

**“These celebrities have shown their fans that having HIV should not stop you from pursuing your dreams and achieving your goals!”**

When **American actor Charlie Sheen** announced he is HIV-positive, he joined other celebrities who decided to use their fame to confront HIV stigma, and to help others feel comfortable to talk about being positive.

These celebrities have shown their fans that having HIV should not stop you from pursuing your dreams and achieving your goals!

**Here are just a few you might know:**

**Basketball legend Magic Johnson** was one of the first celebrities to publicly disclose his HIV-positive status, in 1991. Before his announcement, HIV was not thought of as a disease spread among 'straight' people. Since then, he founded the Magic Johnson Foundation and has dedicated his life to HIV education and helping those living with HIV. He is living with HIV for 27 years!

**Gospel artist Musa 'Queen' Njoko** publicly disclosed her HIV-positive status in 1995. She was 22 when she was diagnosed, at a time when treatment was not available in South Africa. She faced a lot of stigma and hostility but also found support. Twenty years later, Musa continues to tell her story of life with HIV through her advocacy and policy work and through her music in South Africa and globally. Musa urges people to test for HIV and although she shows how to live well with HIV, she says 'prevention is the only cure'.

**Actress Lesego Motsepe**, who for 10 years played Lettie Matabane in *Isidingo*, disclosed her status on World AIDS Day in 2011. She said "Our society had made this virus a monster and all it is, is a virus. I'm doing it for the voiceless people out there who just found out today, and know that I've got their back." Sadly Motsepe stopped using life-saving ARVs in 2012. She died in 2014.

**Radio DJ Criselda Kananda**, was diagnosed HIV positive more than 13 years ago, when she was seven months pregnant. Today she is a mother of 3, motivational speaker, professional counsellor, former nurse, medical underwriter and serves on the board of the South African National AIDS Council. Criselda uses her personal story to inspire and encourage individuals to take responsibility for the choices they make.

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**Former football player Thabang Sefatsa**, publicly disclosed that he has been living with HIV for the past 2 years on World AIDS Day 2015. Sefatsa decided to reveal his status because he wants to encourage people to start testing.

Magic Johnson and a large number of others (like Constitutional Court Justice Edwin Cameron) know that taking their treatment everyday means that they can live a full and healthy life.

HIV is a personal matter but these celebrities chose to use their fame to discuss their HIV status and to advocate for compassion and awareness around HIV, hoping to help others to do the same.

Have more questions about HIV? Ask an expert for free on:  
[www.bwisehealth.com/article/have-more-questions-about-hiv](http://www.bwisehealth.com/article/have-more-questions-about-hiv)