Global HIV Incidence Is High in Both Pregnant and New Moms

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Global rates of new HIV cases (also known as incident HIV) are high among pregnant women and new mothers, putting their children at high risk of mother-to-child transmission (MTCT), aidsmap reports. Publishing their findings in PLOS Medicine, researchers conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis of 47 studies, drawn from a pool spanning from 1980 to 2013, that looked at HIV incidence during and directly after pregnancy and its link to MTCT. (HIV can be transmitted through breast-feeding.)

The analysis examined 19 cohort studies, which all concerned women in sub-Saharan Africa, 22,803 in total. The pooled HIV incidence was 3.8 per 100 person years while the women were pregnant and 2.9 per 100 person years during the postpartum period.

Thirteen studies provided information about MTCT resulting from women who acquired HIV during pregnancy or during the postpartum period. The pooled MTCT rate for those who contracted HIV while pregnant was 17.8 percent, compared with 26.9 percent for those who became HIV positive postpartum. This difference was not statistically significant, meaning it could have occurred by chance.

Finally, five studies compared the likelihood of MTCT during incident versus chronic infection. Acquiring HIV during pregnancy or postpartum was liked to a 2.8-fold greater risk of MTCT.

The investigators stated that their findings stress that women should be tested for HIV repeatedly during pregnancy and when breast-feeding, a testing scenario that is rare.

To read the aidsmap story, click here.

To read the study, click here.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/MTCT-risk-25451-3801