Treating HIV and Addiction Together Packs a Life-Saving Punch

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Providing both opioid substitution therapy (OST) and antiretrovirals (ARVs) to HIV-positive injection drug users (IDUs) saves more lives than giving just one of the therapies, aidsmap reports. Researchers analyzed information on 1,727 HIV-positive IDUs in the British Columbia HIV cohort database between 1996 and 2010, presenting their findings at the 8th International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention in Vancouver, British Columbia.

A total of 28.5 percent of cohort died during a median 5.1-year period. Fifty-five percent of the deaths were related to HIV and 18 percent to drug use, with the other deaths resulting from other causes.

OST use slashed the risk of HIV-related death by 80 percent, but did not significantly reduce the mortality risk in most analyses.

HIV treatment lowered the risk of HIV- and drug-related death. Taking both ARVs and OST was associated with the greatest mortality risk reduction, cutting the death risk by 86 to 94 percent. Overall, those on ARVs and OST were one-third to one-half as liked to die as those only taking HIV treatment.

To read the aidsmap article, click here.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/OST-treatment-27595-2350