Viread Gel Linked to Lowered Risk of Herpes Among Women

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Women who regularly used a Viread (tenofovir)–based vaginal gel had a 46 percent reduced risk of acquiring herpes simplex virus type 2 (HSV-2), according to a secondary analysis of the VOICE trial, aidsmap reports. Researchers presented their findings at the HIV Research for Prevention conference in Cape Town, South Africa.

The VOICE trial was a Phase IIb, randomized, double-blind study testing the safety and efficacy of daily oral Truvada (tenofovir/emtricitabine) as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) against HIV as well as a vaginal microbicide gel containing 1 percent Viread as PrEP. Overall adherence was very low, with less than 25 percent of the women demonstrating evidence of having used the gel.

Among the women who did not use the gel, the rate of HSV-2 acquisition was 20.1 percent, compared with 11.5 percent among those who used the gel regularly. There was no significant difference in the rate of new HSV-2 cases between those who were given a placebo gel and those who were assigned to take the Viread-containing gel but who had no detectable drug: The respective rates were 17 percent and 19.2 percent.

More research is still needed to determine the relation between using Viread and the likelihood of acquiring HSV-2.

To read the aidsmap story, click here.

To see a PowerPoint presentation on this study, which includes an audio of the presentation, click here.

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