Among Women, HIV Is Tied to Chronic Health Conditions

High blood pressure, diabetes, lung disease and cardiovascular disease are all more prevalent among women with HIV.

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For women, living with HIV is associated with a higher prevalence of various other chronic health conditions.

In a letter to the editor published in Clinical Infectious Diseases, Morgan Birabaharan, MD, of the department of infectious diseases and global public health at the University of California, San Diego, and his colleagues described their findings after comparing rates of chronic health conditions among women based on their HIV status.

They analyzed data from a large electronic medical records system, assembling a study cohort of 10,590 HIV-positive women and 14.6 million HIV-negative women who were active in the database between 2015 and 2020.

Compared with the HIV-negative women, the HIV-positive women had a higher prevalence of various chronic health conditions, including high blood pressure (49% versus 31%), diabetes (22% versus 12%), cardiovascular disease (13% versus 7%) and lung disease (36% versus 17%). All these conditions were more common among the HIV-positive women regardless of age.

After adjusting the data to account for age and race, the investigators found that having HIV was associated with a respective 1.37-fold, 1.48-fold, 2.05-fold and 2.06-fold greater likelihood of having high blood pressure, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and lung disease.

The study also found that women with HIV are developing these chronic diseases at younger ages than women who don’t have the virus.

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