How Do Men and Women Age Differently With HIV?

This $14 million research project aims to find out. Here's why it's based in Miami.

August 5, 2019 By Caroline Tien

The National Institutes of Health has awarded researchers at the University of Miami (UM) $14 million to study HIV in aging populations, reports the Miami New Times.

The researchers will spearhead a seven-year project that looks at the differences between men and women as they age with HIV. Investigators will track rates of noninfectious diseases—including cardiovascular conditions, such as high cholesterol; pulmonary conditions, such as emphysema; metabolic and degenerative conditions, such as diabetes and osteoporosis; and mental health issues, such as Alzheimer's.

According to a press release from UM's Miller School of Medicine, researchers will also look at hepatitis B and C, human papillomaviruses (HPV) and herpes simplex. They also hope to learn more about neurocognition and the microbiome.

The study will be led by Deborah Jones Weiss, PhD, MEd, a professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at the Miami Center for AIDS Research; Margaret Fischl, MD, the director of the Miami Center for AIDS Research; and Maria Alcaide, MD, the director of UM's infectious disease research unit. They will work with HIV researchers at UM as well as those at 12 other sites across the country.

The collaborative efforts will also involve two long-running HIV studies that have recently merged: the national Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study (MACS), which launched in 1984 and continues to follow men who have sex with men who are living with or at risk for HIV, and its female counterpart, the Women's Interagency Health Study (WIHS).

"We are hoping to learn about the long-term consequences of HIV infection in men and women," said Jones Weiss. "Understanding HIV better will allow us to design guidelines for health over the patient's entire life span."

Miami is a prime location for this research. Not only is it located in the South, which is ground zero for today's epidemic, but the Miami–Fort Lauderdale–West Palm Beach metropolitan area leads the nation in new HIV diagnoses, according to the university's press release, and it has a diverse

population.

“Miami has some of the highest rates of racially and ethnically diverse gay men being infected,” Jones Weiss said. “Miami gives us the opportunity to bring people into this cohort study who are not available in large numbers anywhere else.”

The Miami New Times notes that 27,969 residents were HIV positive in 2017, nearly four times the national average. Public health officials say the high rates are the result of poor sex education, a lack of awareness of and access to Truvada as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and Republican efforts to kill needle exchanges—though on that last topic, lawmakers did an about-face and expanded a statewide needle exchange program (for more details, see this POZ news item).

To read other recent POZ articles about HIV in Florida, click here and here.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/men-women-age-differently-hiv