Treatment Rates Are Low as HIV Prevalence Stays the Same

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A new snapshot of the U.S. HIV epidemic has found that the number of Americans living with HIV has likely held essentially steady in recent years, and that only half of HIV-positive respondents to a health survey were on treatment for the virus, Healio reports. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) conducted an analysis of nearly 10,500 participants in the 2007 to 2012 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey and published the findings on the agency's website.

Separate research has estimated that about 37 percent of HIV-positive Americans are taking antiretrovirals (ARVs) for HIV. This new CDC analysis does not necessarily conflict with or supersede that particular estimate.

From 2007 to 2012, the national health survey included Americans between 18 and 49 years of age. In 2009, the survey began including individuals between 50 and 59 years old as well.

Comparing 1996 to 2006 survey results with the 2007 to 2012 data set, the researchers found that, for the 18-to-49 group, HIV prevalence dropped from 0.47 percent to 0.31 percent. However, this change was not statistically significant, meaning it could have occurred by chance.

During the 2007 to 2012 period, the majority of people living with HIV in the survey were black. African Americans had a prevalence rate of 1.6 percent, compared with 0.23 percent among all others. Men had a prevalence rate of 0.61, compared with 0.16 percent among women.

Of the HIV-positive respondents, 51.9 percent said they had taken ARVs in the last month.

To read the Healio report, click here.

To read the CDC report, click here.

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