

A comparison of virological suppression and rebound between Indigenous and non-Indigenous persons initiating combination antiretroviral therapy in a multisite cohort of individuals living with HIV in Canada

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Objective

This study compares treatment outcomes between indigenous and non-indigenous individuals living with HIV.

Importance of this Study

- Indigenous persons are more likely to experience negative health outcomes than the general Canadian population, and they are disproportionately affected by HIV.
- Successful outcomes of HIV treatment (antiretroviral therapy) are not evenly distributed across populations.
- There is conflicting evidence about differences in HIV treatment outcomes between Indigenous and non-indigenous persons in Canada, and this study aims to fill this research gap.

How this Study was Conducted

- Data was analyzed from the CANOC collaboration, an interprovincial collaborative cohort of HIV-positive individuals on antiretroviral therapy in Canada.
- Participants included individuals 18 years old and over who began treatment between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2012.
- Outcomes studied included the time between commencing treatment and suppression, and the time between suppression and rebound.
- Demographic data collected on ethnicity was used to compare these outcomes between indigenous and non-indigenous persons.

Study Results

- Indigenous study participants were less likely than non-indigenous participants to achieve suppression, which is the desired outcome of treatment.
- One year after commencing treatment, 54% of Indigenous persons achieved suppression compared to 77% of Caucasian and 80% of African, Caribbean, or Black persons.
- Indigenous persons were not more likely to experience rebound once the study results were adjusted to consider other risk factors, including clinical and sociodemographic characteristics.

Implications

- There is a need for interventions that target Indigenous persons living with HIV.
- Interventions should focus on the first year of HIV treatment, because this is when suppression is usually achieved.

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