

Gender Differences in Clinical Outcomes among HIV-Positive Individuals on Antiretroviral Therapy in Canada

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<p>Objective</p> <p>This study investigated whether there are differences in HIV-related mortality and virologic response to antiretroviral therapy (ART) based on gender and injection drug use (IDU) history.</p>	<p>Main Finding</p> <p>This study found that HIV-positive women in Canada experience a significantly heightened risk of poor clinical outcomes.</p>
<p>Importance of this Study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women have unique HIV infection and treatment experiences that require further examination. • Gender differences in ART clinical responses have not been previously explored using data from multiple provinces. • Investigating clinical outcomes by gender can better inform policy and treatment guidelines. 	<p>How this Study was Conducted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data were analyzed from the CANOC collaboration, an interprovincial collaborative cohort of HIV-positive individuals on ART in Canada. • CANOC compiled HIV clinical, virological, immunologic, and demographic data from 8 cohorts across British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec. • 5,442 participants (1,120 of whom were women) from the CANOC collaboration were included in this analysis.

Study Results

- Women with and without IDU history were 13% less likely to achieve virologic suppression compared to men.
- Women with IDU history were 1.15 times more likely to experience virologic rebound compared to men.
- After adjusting for presumed ART use in pregnancy, there were no significant gender differences in time to virologic suppression for non-IDU and time to virologic rebound for IDU.
- Significant gender differences in survival were not observed.

Implications

- Regardless of IDU history, women experience poorer responses to ART as measured by virologic suppression and virologic rebound.
- Female participants in CANOC may experience psychosocial and systemic barriers to HIV care that were not detected in this study.
- Services that are tailored to women's needs are crucial for improving health outcomes.

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