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HIV Treatment as Prevention (TasP)

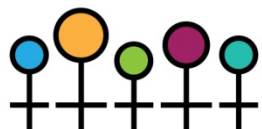
Last updated: November 8, 2023

Together, we can change the course of the HIV epidemic...one woman at a time.

#onewomanatatime

www.thewellproject.org

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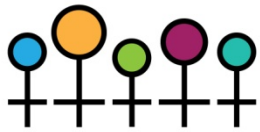
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What Is Treatment as Prevention?

Treatment as prevention (TasP): using HIV treatment to **lower the risk of transmitting HIV**

- For people living with HIV:
 - Taking HIV drugs can reduce viral load, which means:
 - Less likely to transmit HIV to others
 - *Unable* to transmit HIV through sex (U=U)
 - Feel better because they have a healthier immune system





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Preventing Perinatal Transmission

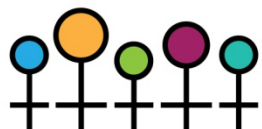
- In 1990s, research showed **zidovudine** for pregnant people living with HIV reduced risk of transmitting HIV to their babies
- Now standard practice to:
 - Test pregnant people for HIV
 - Provide HIV drugs to pregnant people living with HIV
 - Give HIV drugs to babies of people living with HIV
- With HIV treatment and undetectable viral load, the chance of transmitting HIV to the baby can be less than 1 in 100
- Often called **preventing mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT)** but term is stigmatizing
- Better: **preventing perinatal or vertical transmission**



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TasP in Sexually Active Adults

- TasP can help **mixed-status couples** safely conceive
- **PrEP** can also help keep HIV-negative partner negative
- **2011 HTPN 052 study:** HIV treatment and undetectable viral load -> little chance of transmission to HIV-negative partner in mixed-status relationship
 - Even when partner living with HIV had no HIV-related symptoms and CD4 count between 350-500 cells/mm³
- **2016 PARTNER study:** No transmission if partner living with HIV has undetectable viral load (**U=U**)

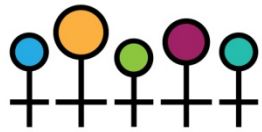


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Treatment with a Public Health Twist

HPTN 052 *changed HIV prevention*

- Additional tool – treatment – in prevention toolbox
- How it works from **public health** (vs. individual health) point of view:
 - If enough people living with HIV could be treated so that their viral loads became undetectable
 - They would be much less likely to transmit HIV
 - Number of new HIV cases would drop remarkably
 - Called a drop in **community viral load**



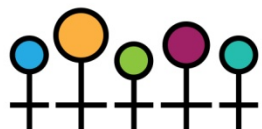
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Treatment with a Public Health Twist

Test and treat strategies recommend universal HIV testing to identify, then treat, all people living with HIV

Success depends on:

- Health care systems' ability to provide testing, linkage to care, HIV drugs
- Willingness of people to get tested for HIV
 - Stigma, discrimination may prevent people from getting tested
- Willingness, ability of people living with HIV to adhere to HIV drug regimens so their viral load remains undetectable
 - Participants in first large study of strategy didn't adhere to treatment -> unsuccessful



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Additional Methods for Preventing HIV

For HIV-negative people:

- **PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis)**
 - Taking drugs before exposure to prevent disease
 - HIV-negative people taking HIV drugs to reduce their risk of acquiring HIV if exposed to the virus
 - Especially helpful for HIV-negative women who want to get pregnant and whose male partners are living with HIV
 - Promising tool women can use to ***prevent HIV without partners' knowledge or cooperation***

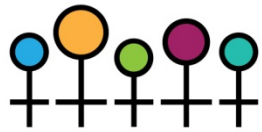


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Additional Methods for Preventing HIV

For HIV-negative people:

- **PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis)**
 - Taking HIV drugs for +/- 1 month after possible HIV exposure (needle-stick, sex without condom, sexual assault)
 - To be effective, PEP must be taken right away – within first 72 hours after exposure to HIV, if possible

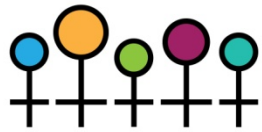


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In Conclusion

Research continues to show ***TasP can be a game-changer*** in the course of HIV pandemic

TasP can not only positively affect **health of those living with HIV**, but also **protect those who are not living with HIV**
Undetectable = Untransmittable



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Learn More!

- To learn more, and for links to articles featuring more details, please read the full fact sheet:
 - [HIV Treatment as Prevention \(TasP\)](#)
- For more fact sheets and to connect to our community of women living with HIV, visit:
 - www.thewellproject.org
 - www.facebook.com/thewellproject
 - www.twitter.com/thewellproject