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HIV Treatment Guidelines for Pregnant People and Their Infants

Last updated: March 21, 2024

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

#onewomanatatime

www.thewellproject.org

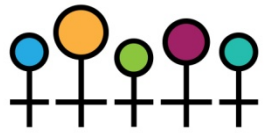
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What Are HIV Treatment Guidelines?

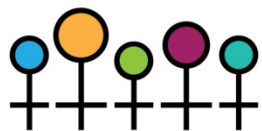
- Help providers, people living with HIV:
 - decide when to start, stop, change HIV medications
 - choose among different HIV drugs
- Prepared by experts in HIV prevention and treatment during and after pregnancy



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US-Based Guidelines

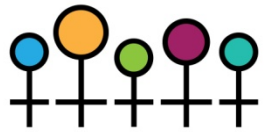
- Prepared by US Department of Health and Human Services:
 - General HIV treatment guidelines
 - HIV treatment guidelines during pregnancy
 - HIV treatment guidelines for children
- Regularly reviewed and updated by HIV experts
- The Well Project also has fact sheets on general HIV treatment, caring for children and getting pregnant



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Global Guidelines

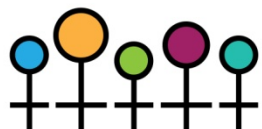
- Guidelines differ by country
- Global agreement on HIV treatment for all people living with HIV
- Other recommendations can vary by region, for example on infant feeding:
 - Breast/chestfeeding recommended in low-income countries
 - Bottle feeding was recommended in high-income countries
 - British and US guidelines **now recommend shared decision-making** between parent and provider about infant feeding
 - Guidelines help providers support parents who chest/breastfeed



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January 2024 Perinatal Guidelines

- Provide new guidance on the following:
 - Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) to prevent HIV
 - Care for people who may become pregnant
 - Getting pregnant when one partner lives with HIV
 - HIV drugs during pregnancy
 - Infant feeding
 - Caring for the newborn



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Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)

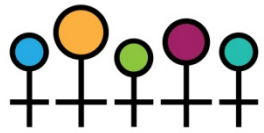
- People with vaginas:
 - Take PrEP daily, not just “on demand”
 - Use Truvada, not Descovy
 - If stopping PrEP, continue 7-28 days after last possible HIV acquisition
- Pregnant people:
 - Register with [Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry](#)
 - Gives researchers data that may change recommendations



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PLWH Who May Become Pregnant

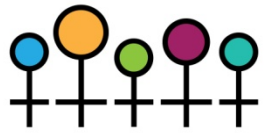
- Before pregnancy:
 - If on long-acting injectable cabotegravir, switch to daily pills before conception
 - Prevents drug from still being in body when parent becomes pregnant
- If difficulty taking medication as prescribed:
 - Healthcare provider and patient should decide together whether to switch to oral drugs



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Getting Pregnant

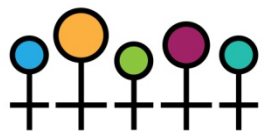
- Healthcare providers should discuss PrEP with anyone not living with HIV
 - Includes people who want to get pregnant
- People wanting to get pregnant may need to be screened for infections in their genital tract before conceiving



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HIV Drugs in Pregnancy

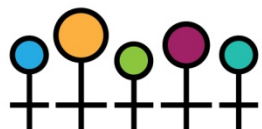
- If already taking effective HIV drugs:
 - Usually keep taking the same drugs
- If not on HIV drugs when becoming pregnant:
 - Start treatment right away
 - Specific preferred drug combinations
- If on long-acting Cabenuva for PrEP:
 - Different preferred drug combination
- If not virologically suppressed:
 - Change entire drug regimen, don't just add a drug
- Little information on drug safety in pregnancy



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Infant Feeding (from 2023 update)

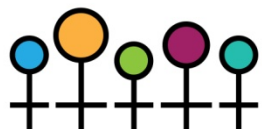
- Encourage shared decision-making
 - Formula if parent's viral load not undetectable
 - Access to safe water, enough formula not guaranteed even in US
- Judgment-free support for feeding decision
 - Don't involve Child Protective Services!
- UK database: breast/chestfeeding safe
- See our fact sheets on this topic



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Caring for the Newborn (from 2023 update)

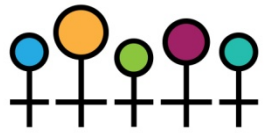
- HIV drugs recommended for infants to prevent them from acquiring HIV
- Specific drugs and duration differ:
 - If parent virally suppressed during pregnancy:
 - Zidovudine for 4 weeks
 - If parent not virally suppressed or has acute HIV:
 - Several HIV drugs for 2-6 weeks
 - Breastfed infants should also get HIV drugs
 - Only certain drugs are recommended for infants
 - Different if baby is very premature



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Other Information in Guidelines

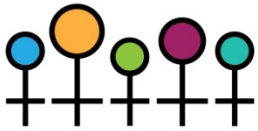
- Procedures to avoid during labor and delivery
- People who don't know their HIV status when they give birth
- Pregnancy in transgender/gender diverse people
 - May need to consider gender-affirming hormones taken



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Taking Care of Yourself

- Guidelines are a set of recommendations
- They are always changing and based on the most up-to-date information from studies and clinical trials
- They are only general suggestions!
 - OK for you and your healthcare provider to choose therapies for your specific situation



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Learn More!

- To learn more, please read the full fact sheet on this topic:
 - [HIV Treatment Guidelines for Pregnant People and Their Infants](#)
- 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](#)
 - [www.instagram.com/thewellprojecthiv](#)
 - [www.youtube.com/thewellprojecthiv](#)