

HIV infection rates lower in high treatment areas: study

March 8 2012

A new study shows that people living in areas where uptake of HIV treatment is high are less likely to acquire the virus than in places where few are given care, UNAIDS said Thursday.

The research by the Africa Centre for Health and Population Studies marks the first time that the positive impact of antiretroviral therapy on infection rates has been proven for a community, said the UN agency.

"These findings are extremely important," said UNAIDS programme division's deputy executive director Paul De Lay.

"UNAIDS encourages all countries and communities to achieve high coverage of antiretroviral therapy, both for the benefit of people living with [HIV](#) and for the communities in which they live," said De Lay.

The research on data collected from eastern South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province found that in areas where antiretroviral therapy uptake is above 30 percent, uninfected people are 38 percent less likely to acquire the [human immunodeficiency virus](#).

"It is the first time that we have been able to show such results in a population setting -- an important finding which will help guide the [AIDS](#) response," said Frank Tanser from the research centre in the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

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Citation: HIV infection rates lower in high treatment areas: study (2012, March 8) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-03-hiv-infection-high-treatment-areas.html>

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