

Worse lower, higher, frequency hearing in HIV-positive adults

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Adults with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV+) had poorer lower- and higher-frequency hearing than adults without HIV infection, according to a report published online by *JAMA Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery*.

The relationship between HIV and [hearing loss](#) in the era of highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART) has not been investigated thoroughly, according to the study background.

Peter Torre III, Ph.D., of San Diego State University, California, and coauthors evaluated pure-tone hearing thresholds among 262 men (117 HIV+) and 134 women (105 HIV+). The men had an average age of 57 years and the women were an average age of nearly 48.

The authors found that high-frequency pure-tone average (HPTA) and low-frequency (LPTA) were significantly higher (i.e. poorer hearing) for HIV+ adults compared with HIV- adults for the better ear. The results were independent of long-term exposure to antiretroviral medications, current CD4+ cell count and HIV viral load.

"To our knowledge, this is the first study to demonstrate that HIV+ individuals have poorer hearing across the frequency range after many other factors known to affect hearing have been controlled for," the study concludes.

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