

Giving women HIV self-tests promotes male partner testing

November 8 2016

Providing pregnant and postpartum women in sub-Saharan Africa with multiple HIV self-tests can make it more likely their male partners will be tested for HIV compared to a standard approach of distributing invitation cards for clinic-based testing, according to a randomized trial published in *PLOS Medicine* by Harsha Thirumurthy of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA, and colleagues.

Low use of testing services in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly by men, is one of the key barriers to meeting targets that UNAIDS has set for HIV prevention. Moreover, efforts to encourage pregnant women and postpartum women to refer their partners for testing and to test as a couple, in order to help prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV, have had limited success. Between June and October 2015, Thirumurthy and colleagues enrolled in their study 600 women seeking pregnancy and postpartum care at three facilities in Kisumu County, Kenya. All women enrolled were 18-39 years old, had a partner that was not known to be HIV-positive, and agreed to participate. Half the women were given two oral fluid-based HIV self-test kits to take home, instructions on use, and were encouraged to give a test to their male partner or to test with their partner if they felt comfortable. The other 300 women were given invitation cards to give their partner for HIV testing at a clinic. Over the following three months, women were followed up to determine if their partner had self-tested or visited a clinic to test for HIV.

In the group that received HIV self-tests, 90.8 percent of partners were reported to have tested within 3 months of enrollment in the study. In the

comparison group, 51.7 percent of partners were reported to have visited a clinic for HIV testing. Based on these results, self-tests led to 39.1% more partner testing than the control (95% confidence interval 32.4% to 45.8%, P

Citation: Giving women HIV self-tests promotes male partner testing (2016, November 8)
retrieved 25 April 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-11-women-hiv-self-tests-male-partner.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.