

Improved retention and outcomes with same-day HIV testing and treatment

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Initiating antiretroviral therapy (ART) on the same day as HIV testing is feasible and leads to improved retention and health outcomes, according to a trial published in *PLOS Medicine*.

Standard care for patients who [test](#) positive for HIV in most settings involves multiple visits for counseling and laboratory procedures to prepare patients for ART initiation and determine eligibility, but this process typically takes weeks and can be a barrier to starting treatment. To determine if accelerating this process can improve retention and [health outcomes](#), Serena Koenig of Brigham and Women's Hospital, USA, Jean William Pape of Weill Medical College of Cornell University, USA, and their colleagues conducted a [randomized trial](#) of same-day ART initiation at the GHESKIO Centers in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Adults testing positive for HIV with early stage disease were randomized to either standard care (3 weekly visits with a social worker and physician before starting ART), or same-day ART (starting treatment on the day of HIV diagnosis). They found that 12 months after HIV testing, retention in care was improved (80% of participants in the same-day ART group versus 72% of the standard care group), as was evidence that ART was working (53% versus 44% with viral load

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