

Mortality increased for infants under 5 with HIV receiving antiretrovirals, research finds

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More infants and children aged younger than 5 years with HIV receiving antiretroviral therapy (ART) die compared with those aged 5 years and older receiving ART, according to research published in the Dec. 1 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Nickolas T. Agathis, M.D., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues compared mortality and related clinical measures among [infants](#) younger than 1 year and children aged 1 to 4 years living with HIV and receiving ART compared to those of [older persons](#) aged 5 to 14, 15 to 49, and 50 years and older living with HIV and receiving ART.

An average of 11,980 infants aged younger than 1 year and 105,510 children aged 1 to 4 years were receiving ART each quarter during October 2020 to September 2022; of these, 4.9 and 2.5 percent, respectively, were reported to have died annually.

The researchers found that compared with the proportions of persons aged 5 years and older receiving ART, the proportions of infants and children who died ranged from four to nine times higher in infants aged younger than 1 year and from two to five times higher in children aged 1 to 4 years.

The proportions of children aged younger than 5 years living with HIV who experienced interruptions in treatment were also higher compared with persons aged 5 years and older, while lower proportions were seen with a documented HIV viral load result or suppressed viral load.

"Prioritizing and optimizing HIV and general health services for children aged

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