

HIV raises anal cancer risk in women, study says

16 April 2012



Findings indicate gay men aren't only ones who need screening.

(HealthDay) -- Women with HIV are at increased risk for anal cancer, a new study finds.

Researchers at Montefiore Medical Center in New York City looked at 715 HIV-infected women and found that 10.5 percent had some form of anal disease and about one-third of those women had precancerous disease.

"Anal cancer was widely associated with HIV-infected men who have sex with men. But now, this study reveals anal precancerous disease in a high proportion of women with HIV," Dr. Mark Einstein, director of [clinical research](#) in the division of gynecologic oncology and a professor at [Albert Einstein](#) College of Medicine, said in a Montefiore news release.

The increased risk of anal cancer in HIV-infected women is likely because HIV is associated with [human papillomavirus](#) (HPV), which causes nearly all anal cancers, the researchers said.

The study appears May 1 in the *Journal of AIDS*.

The researchers said their findings suggest that all HIV-infected women who have abnormal findings

on tests of anal [tissue samples](#) should be referred for high resolution anoscopy, a visual examination of the inside of the anus.

In addition, all HIV-infected women and men should be considered for anal cancer screening, the researchers said.

More information: The U.S. National Cancer Institute has more about [anal cancer](#).

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APA citation: HIV raises anal cancer risk in women, study says (2012, April 16) retrieved 20 June 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-04-hiv-anal-cancer-women.html>

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