

HIV Does Not End That Makes The Epidemic Increasingly Valid

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Summary

What should be done and what can be done in all the fields covered by AIDS: clinical, treatment, diagnosis, virology, nursing care, drug use, sexuality, prevention, epidemiology, social aspects, and even economics.

The female condom probably will not be the definitive solution, as the male condom was not and how microbicides will not be, but a group of women will be useful and sure that the practice will improve its use.

With respect to the novelties in the prevention among drug users, the heroin dispensing programs that, following the Swiss model, have started in Andalusia stand out. There are also heroin injection rooms. So far there was only one in Madrid and the positive results have meant that the opening of another room in Bilbao is planned.

Finally, it is essential to try to stop one of the most dramatic routes of HIV transmission: the maternal-fetal one. In our community, a child infected with HIV is still born every year.

In the field of prevention, Euskadi is the Autonomous Community with the most experience in syringe exchange programs, especially in prisons, which has served as a reference to the rest of the State and has contributed decisively to curbing the epidemic in the collective of drug users.

What is HIV? The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV or HIV, for its acronym in English) is a virus that affects the system of defenses of the body, called the immune system. Once weakened by HIV, the defense system allows the appearance of diseases. This advanced stage of HIV infection is what is called Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). This means that AIDS is a set of symptoms (syndrome) that appears due to an insufficiency of the immune system (immunodeficiency) caused by a virus that is transmitted from person to person (acquired)

Therefore, not everyone with HIV has AIDS, but every person who has an AIDS picture has HIV. A person with HIV does not necessarily develop symptoms or diseases. However, you can transmit it. We call opportunistic diseases infections or tumors that develop in the context of a deteriorated immune system and are those that mark a picture of AIDS. People who reach the stage of AIDS, can access treatments that allow to reverse that state, overcoming the disease that has appeared and recovering an adequate level of defenses.

How is HIV detected? HIV has no symptoms. Therefore, the only way to know if someone contracted HIV is through a test. In Argentina, it is estimated that thirty percent of people living with HIV do not know they have it

The HIV test is a blood test that detects the presence of antibodies to HIV. There are two types of test: the so-called ELISA, which is a blood sample taken in a laboratory and the rapid test, for which a few drops of blood are deposited from the tip of a finger on a test strip and the result is obtained twenty minutes later. In both cases, if the result is positive, it must be confirmed with a laboratory test called Western Blot.

The HIV test is voluntary, confidential and does not require a medical order. In all public hospitals and health centers it is free. Find here where to do the test. Window period Once HIV infection occurs; the antibodies take 3 to 4 weeks to be detected. That is, during this time, called "window period", the analysis can be negative even if the person has the virus. That is why when there was a risk situation, if the analysis was done during the body.

A positive result means: That HIV antibodies are found in the blood. That is, the person has HIV. It does not mean that you have AIDS. That person can transmit HIV to another person. That he should use condoms in sexual relations so as not to transmit HIV and avoid the risk of re-infection, that is, that another strain different from HIV enters the body. That, in case a person becomes pregnant; he should take the necessary precautions to avoid transmission to the baby.

Treatments

AIDS in our society is no longer synonymous with death. The advances made in the treatments, mainly combination antiretroviral therapies, have dramatically slowed the mortality of patients, which has happened in Euskadi from 409 patients died during 1996, to 86 in 2002. Another significant fact of what is happening is the increase in survival. In 1993, the survival of AIDS patients three months after their diagnosis was less than 20%: out of every five patients diagnosed with AIDS, at four months four had died. In contrast, in 2002, survival at three months is 95% and long-term life expectancies are excellent. Every year the number of patients in treatment is increasing. Thus, at the end of last year, the number of patients in our Community who were on antiretroviral therapy was 3,568, 4% more than the previous year. Of these, 3,071 (83%) in triple therapy, 294 (11%) in quadruple therapy and 112 (3%) in double therapy. The simplification of the therapy, in which forced labor is being carried out, constitutes the most promising line of work today. Another of the lines of work is to enhance the natural immunity of patients. From the time a person becomes infected until their immune system collapses, 10 years pass. During that time it is the immune system itself that keeps the AIDS virus at bay. If we get the immune system to maintain its active defense for longer, we will have opened a new, highly effective therapeutic pathway. In this sense, it would seek to find the natural substances of our immune system that

are effective and active in the defense and inject them into the body, so that the immunity itself is supported and strengthened, extending its role in the control of the infection and can delay or interrupt cyclically combined treatment with antiretroviral.

The vaccine

In July 2002, Professor Montagnier said at the Barcelona International Conference that "eradicating AIDS is a dream that can be made possible thanks to the vaccine". But vaccine research is complex and expensive. Last March, the media around the world echoed the failure of the first preventive vaccine against HIV. The long-awaited results of AIDSVAX, the first AIDS vaccine candidate to have completed the entire experimental phase in humans, caused great disappointment. The short-term future of the vaccine is uncertain and it can be said that short-term...

Conclusion

"The numbers impact by themselves, but the idea is much stronger when we realize that each number is a person with a history, a life, a family. We cannot ignore it. Ignoring it or believing that "HIV already was," is what makes the epidemic more valid than ever," Remember live statistics: each number is a person.....

References

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