

HST 60percent – 8 September 2023

CLINICAL STUDIES BRING GIFT OF SEXUAL HEALTH CLOSER FOR WOMEN



Health-e News | 30 August 2023

A South African innovation designed to screen for inflammation associated with HIV infections and improve women's sexual and reproductive health has been manufactured and has entered its first in-field clinical studies. Almost 700 women will be involved in the validation of the Genital Inflammation Test (GIFT) developed at the University of Cape Town (UCT). GIFT is the focus of an international collaboration of almost exclusively female scientists led by Professor Jo-Ann Passmore of UCT and Dr Lindi Masson, originally of UCT, but now of the Burnet Institute in Australia. The trial development includes a partnership with Cape Town biotechnology company Medical Diagnostech under the leadership of Ashley Uys and Lyndon Mungar.

<https://health-e.org.za/2023/08/30/clinical-studies-bring-gift-of-sexual-health-closer-for-women/>

'Motherhood is hard': young, HIV-positive mums in South Africa open up about regret and anger



Aidsmap | 30 August 2023

For any woman, pregnancy and giving birth are major life-changing experiences. Becoming a mother brings with it a range of emotions and, in many African cultures, positive emotions are centred when talking about motherhood. Scholarship from the eastern, western and southern parts of the continent has emphasised how motherhood is linked to notions of continuity, strength and sacrifice, unconditional love, consecration and spirituality, family ties, loyalty and happiness.

<https://theconversation.com/motherhood-is-hard-young-hiv-positive-mums-in-south-africa-open-up-about-regret-and-anger-192338>

Research reveals delays in diagnosing women with endometriosis can take at least 10 years

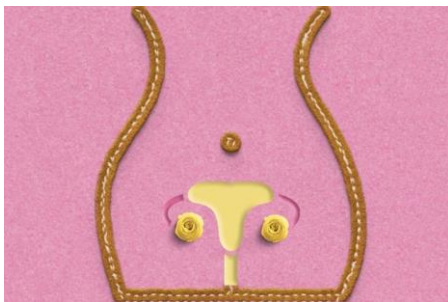


IOL | 1 September 2023

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) and endometriosis are two common gynaecological conditions that affect millions of women worldwide. The characteristics, symptoms and treatment options of these conditions may seem similar, but it is essential to understand their differences.

<https://www.iol.co.za/sunday-tribune/lifestyle/research-reveals-delays-in-diagnosing-women-with-endometriosis-can-take-at-least-10-years-710e9916-2998-4665-813b-1060bf16db36>

Polycystic ovarian syndrome: Expert talks signs and symptoms



News24 | 1 September 2023

Polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) is a disorder in which the ovaries produce unusually high levels of hormones called androgens. This causes the ovaries to swell and develop cysts. There is also a hormonal imbalance, which can result in irregular periods and unpredictable ovulation.

<https://www.news24.com/life/wellness/body/polycystic-ovarian-syndrome-expert-talks-signs-and-symptoms-20230901-2>

Congo-Kinshasa: Beating the Odds - Resilience, Hope and Safe Births At a UNFPA Mobile Clinic in the DRC



AllAfrica | 1 September 2023

NORTH KIVU PROVINCE, Democratic Republic of the Congo - Although heavily pregnant and in pain, Kaindo Bembeleza waited patiently along with dozens of other women on a row of benches under a tarpaulin tent. The women were hoping to be seen by a team of midwives at a mobile clinic run by UNFPA, the UN sexual and reproductive health agency, set up in the Bulengo camp for people displaced by fierce fighting and relentless insecurity in North Kivu province.

<https://allafrica.com/stories/202309010319.html>

HRSA Celebrates the 33rd Anniversary of the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program



Poz | 1 September 2023

On August 18, we celebrated the 33rd anniversary of the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP). On that day in 1990, Congress passed the groundbreaking Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act. The Program was named after the Indiana teen and AIDS advocate Ryan White, who lost his life to AIDS in April 1990. This legislation created the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP), the largest federal program focused exclusively on providing HIV primary medical care, medication, and essential support services to approximately half of people with diagnosed HIV in the U.S. each year. In 2021, more than 576,000 people received services through the program.

<https://www.poz.com/blog/hrsa-celebrates-33rd-anniversary-ryan-white-hiv-aids-program>

Why Would God Give Me HIV?



Poz | 1 September 2023

I contracted HIV from my oldest kid's father. He pursued me; I got pregnant. My first child had Rh factor blood, so my baby had to get a blood transfusion from a donor. I got scared because the doctor said my baby might have HIV. I prayed to God, and to my relief, she was negative. The doctor said my partner had AIDS, but my partner told me there was a mix-up and that someone had stolen his medical card, so I shrugged it off. I was only 19, so I believed him. One time, I saw him get out of the shower, and he was bone skinny. But I didn't make the connection in my head.

<https://www.poz.com/article/god-give-hiv>

Childhood trauma may affect sexual health of women

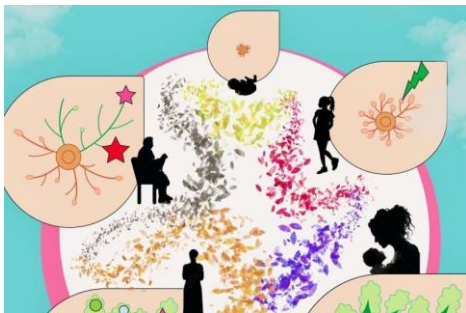


UPI | 5 September 2023

A stressful or traumatic childhood experience -- anything from parents divorcing to a sibling's drug problem -- may have long-term effects on a woman's sexual health. These adverse childhood experiences may be linked to sexual inactivity and dysfunction in women later in life, a recent study reports. Healthcare providers should screen their patients with sexual dysfunction for adverse childhood experiences, researchers recommend. Doctors should offer these women treatment that could include a referral for counseling. "This research adds to the literature exploring sexual function in women," said senior author Dr. Ekta Kapoor, assistant director of the Mayo Clinic Center for Women's Health in Rochester, Minn.

https://www.upi.com/Health_News/2023/09/05/childhood-trauma-adult-sex-life/6521693918977/

Study findings provide new insight into how breast cancer evolves



Medical Xpress | 2 September 2023

From the early stages of cell mutations starting in puberty to their manifestations as breast cancer in later years, the entire process has remained shrouded in mystery. Now, a team of researchers at Kyoto University has revealed the mechanism by which breast cancer is formed in the cells of the mammalian epithelium, whose main function is to secrete milk. The paper is published in the journal Nature.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-08-insight-breast-cancer-evolves.html>

Launching the Global Consortium: Uniting to Prevent HPV and Eliminate Cervical Cancer



PMNCH | 5 September 2023

On the 5-6 September 2023, The Sabin Vaccine Institute is organizing a Convening event in Kuala Lumpur to launch a Global Consortium on Human Papilloma Virus (HPV). The Sabin Vaccine Institute will lead the Consortium and serve as the Secretariat. It will also act as the host for the Convening. In alignment with WHO's Immunization Agenda 2030 and Cervical Cancer Elimination Initiative, the Convening will serve as a platform to kickstart a global movement, propelling country progress towards WHO's 90-70-90 targets and underscoring the need for urgent action towards preventing HPV infections and eliminating cervical cancer as a public health concern.

<https://pmnch.who.int/news-and-events/events/item/2023/09/05/partner-events/launching-the-global-consortium-uniting-to-prevent-hpv-and-eliminate-cervical-cancer>

Hospital Histories: The many lives that started at Mowbray Maternity



Spotlight | 5 September 2023

Weighing little more than three bricks of butter, baby Lunathi Sitembile is pressed against mum Yolanda's bare chest, a thin tube entering her nostril and another taped to her tiny clenched fist. Born premature at 31 weeks (between 37 and 42 weeks are 'full term') Lunathi initially struggled to breathe, but after a week inside an incubator with oxygen airflow administered through a nasal cannula, her little lungs have strengthened.

<https://www.spotlightnsp.co.za/2023/09/05/hospital-histories-the-many-lives-that-started-at-mowbray-maternity/>

GARDASIL 9 shows positive long-term results against HPV-related cancers



Contemporary OB / GYN | 5 September 2023

Results of a phase 3 trial of GARDASIL9 (Human Papillomavirus 9-valent Vaccine, Recombinant) in patients aged 9 to 15 years old, have been published in the journal Pediatrics. GARDASIL 9 is a vaccine developed to prevent cancers caused by multiple human papillomavirus (HPV) types in individuals aged 9 to 45 years. These include cervical, vulvar, vaginal, anal, oropharyngeal, and neck and head cancers, as well as vaginal, vulvar, cervical, and anal lesions. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, tens of thousands of HPV-related cancer diagnoses were given per year from 2015 to 2019. Cervical cancer is the only HPV-related cancer to have routinely recommended screening, with no method available to determine which patients with HPV will develop further health problems.

<https://www.contemporaryobgyn.net/view/gardasil-9-shows-positive-long-term-results-against-hpv-related-cancers>

When It Comes to HIV Treatment, It's Your Choice



Poz | 5 September 2023

There's a magic word to remember when it comes to picking your HIV treatment: choice. Though you may feel that it is best to simply take the pill that your doctor prescribes, the reality is that you are the expert when it comes to your body, and you have a say in which medication you take. After having a conversation with your doctor that includes many of your own preferences around treatment and after they make a recommendation, the ultimate decision on what to take lies with you, as treatment must fit into your routine. Remembering that you get to choose your own treatment is a small mental adjustment that will empower you to live your best life with HIV.

<https://www.poz.com/article/comes-hiv-treatment-choice>

Long-Term Survivors and Youth Benefit From U=U



Poz | 5 September 2023

An HIV survivor for almost 30 years, Gregg Cassin, 65, started his spiritual journey as a boy growing up on Long Island, New York. “As a kid, it was not in the days of Ellen [DeGeneres],” he said, “there were no openly gay people. I had no idea who I was or what I was.” Since there were no role models for him in his life, Cassin did what he calls “the Catholic boy thing.” “I had a spiritual director who was a priest,” Cassin says. “He never came out of the closet; it was just understood that he was gay. I can remember at some point saying to him, ‘Do I have a vocation? Am I going to be a priest?’ And him saying, ‘Move to San Francisco.’”

<https://www.poz.com/article/longterm-survivors-youth-benefit-uu>

Why so many government patients get cervical cancer — and what to do about it



Bhekisisa | 5 September 2023

If private hospitals are willing to rent out open theatre space to government hospitals at an affordable price, thousands of South African women who die of cervical cancer each year, can be saved, says Langanani Mbodi, the head of the gynaecologic oncology units at the University of the Witwatersrand and Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital.

<https://bhekisisa.org/health-news-south-africa/2023-09-05-why-so-many-government-patients-get-cervical-cancer-and-what-to-do-about-it/>

Getting the Word Out About U=U



Poz | 5 September 2023

The message of Undetectable Equals Untransmittable (U=U), the fact that a person living with HIV with an undetectable viral load cannot transmit the virus sexually, is easy to understand. It's a message that has been embraced by the world's leading medical, scientific and public health institutions, including the World Health Organization, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and the National Institutes of Health.

<https://www.poz.com/article/getting-word-uu>

Using Genomic Assays to Learn Which Patients With Breast Cancer Could Get Less Treatment

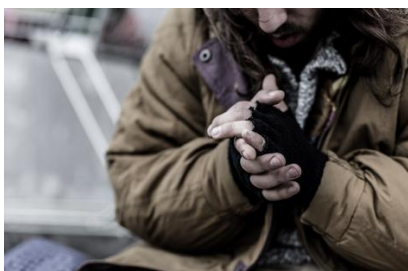


AJMC | 5 September 2023

Being treated for breast cancer is taxing enough without receiving more therapy than necessary. Thanks to the current generation of genomic assays—and a wave of research surrounding them—clinicians are gaining insights into how much therapy individual patients need when treated for early-stage HR-positive, HER2-negative breast cancer (HR+/HER2-), according to Kevin Kalinsky, MD, MS, of Emory University's Winship Cancer Institute.

<https://www.ajmc.com/view/using-genomic-assays-to-learn-which-patients-with-breast-cancer-could-get-less-treatment>

Homelessness linked to 44% lower odds of progressing through HIV care cascade



Aidsmap | 5 September 2023

Fifteen years of data from a cohort of people living with HIV who use drugs in Vancouver, Canada shows that periods of homelessness are associated with a 44% decrease in the odds of overall progression through the HIV care cascade. Specific impacts were recorded for being on HIV treatment, adhering to it and being virally suppressed. The study shows the impact of homelessness, even in a setting where HIV treatment and care are free of charge, and which offers support services for this vulnerable population. This means that outcomes are almost certainly worse in places with higher barriers to getting medical care and support. Researchers at the University of British Columbia published the longitudinal prospective study in the journal AIDS. Data come from 947 people who

took part in ACCESS between 2005 and 2019. This is a cohort of people living with HIV who use illicit drugs, mostly in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside neighbourhood.

<https://www.aidsmap.com/news/sep-2023/homelessness-linked-44-lower-odds-progressing-through-hiv-care-cascade>

Western Cape Health and Wellness Department urges parents to consent to HPV vaccine administered at schools



IOL | 6 September 2023

Cervical cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among women in South Africa and thus the Western Cape Health and Wellness Department urges parents for consent as they embark on its annual human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine drive. The HPV vaccine prevents cervical cancer and the second dose is being administered to children between September 4 and October 31, at schools across the province.

<https://www.iol.co.za/lifestyle/health/western-cape-health-and-wellness-department-urges-parents-to-consent-to-hpv-vaccine-administered-at-schools-ed9a7d6d-d396-489d-a29c-b770588ce87d>

Epidemic preparedness must address gender inequalities if we want improved health outcomes

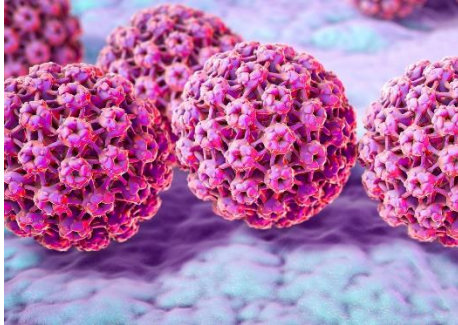


Daily Maverick | 6 September 2023

Often, women bear the brunt of health crises owing to pre-existing gender inequalities which compound the vulnerability of women and girls. It is also well-known that during public health emergencies, girls and women tend to experience higher risks of gender-based violence. The 15th BRICS Summit held in South Africa has just concluded, and it was apt that one of the side events, organised by the BRICS Business Council, Africa Centre for Disease Control and Africa Health Business was on pandemic prevention, preparedness, response and recovery for health security. The global response to the Covid-19 pandemic has underscored a crucial lesson: adequate preparedness is paramount to a solid response for effective health outcomes.

<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2023-09-06-epidemic-preparedness-must-address-gender-inequalities-if-we-want-improved-health-outcomes/>

One in three men carry HPV: The ignored reservoir in the fight against cancer



Human papillomavirus is the most prevalent form of sexually transmitted infection, with most sexually active individuals experiencing at least one infection due to genital HPV during the course of their lives. There are over 200 types of sexually transmitted HPV, and of these, 12 are cancer-causing or oncogenic. While HPV infections are often asymptomatic, they are known to cause long-term morbidity and even mortality. In women, the oncogenic strains of HPV are linked to cervical cancer — one of the most prevalent forms of cancer in women.

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20230906/One-in-three-men-carry-HPV-The-ignored-reservoir-in-the-fight-against-cancer.aspx>

Beauty salon–based intervention increases trust of PrEP among Black cisgender women



EurekaAlert! | 6 September 2023

Among African American and other Black cisgender women, a beauty salon–based intervention improved knowledge and awareness of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) against HIV and increased trust in it, according to a pilot study published in the September issue of *The Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care (JANAC)*, the official journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care. *JANAC* is published in the Lippincott portfolio by Wolters Kluwer. However, most study participants did not self-identify as requiring PrEP or having risk factors for HIV. "Like others, our study found women's willingness to take PrEP increased once they understood how PrEP benefits and protects them, but there remains a gap between willingness and perceived need," lead investigator Schenita D. Randolph, PhD, MPH, RN, FAAN, of Duke University School of Nursing in Durham, North Carolina, and colleagues write.

<https://www.eurekaalert.org/news-releases/1000705>

Promising New Test Detects Elusive Cervical Cancers



The Mirage | 7 September 2023

In findings with potentially important implications for cervical cancer screening, scientists at the National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated Montefiore Einstein Cancer Center (MECC) have developed a test for detecting a type of cervical cancer that Pap tests often miss. The findings published online today in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute (JNCI). "Our novel test appears sensitive for detecting cervical adenocarcinoma [ADC]—which now accounts for up to 25% of cervical cancer cases—as well as its precursor lesions, adenocarcinoma in situ [AIS], that often develop into ADCs," said Howard Strickler, M.D., M.P.H., co-senior and corresponding author of the JNCI paper and a member of MECC.

<https://www.miragenews.com/promising-new-test-detects-elusive-cervical-1079490/>

The Public Health Association of South Africa (PHASA) – calling all public health champions!



PHASA

PHASA is a voluntary organisation of individuals passionate about population health improvements and the reduction of health inequities, and whose work focuses on the prevention of disease, the promotion of health, and the improved functioning of the country's health care system. Are you passionate about improving the health and wellbeing of communities? Do you want to expand your professional network and stay current in the field of public health? Do you want to be part of the movement to improve Public Health? Then join the Public Health Association of South Africa today to make a difference and enhance your career!

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