$2.16M Grant to Tailor HIV Prevention PrEP for Women of Color [VIDEO]

The study hopes to understand why Black women, who are at higher risk for HIV, are not likely to take PrEP.

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Researchers at the University of Rochester Medical Center in New York state received a $2.16 million federal grant to study HIV prevention among women of color. Specifically, the study will examine the use of the daily tablet Truvada as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), according to a press release from the university.

This is an important topic because Black women are at higher risk for HIV. In fact, they make up 30 percent of the female population but 77 percent of new HIV cases among women. At the same time, along with Latinas they are the least likely to take PrEP.

“We hope to figure out what’s behind that,” explains researcher Natalie Leblanc, PhD, MPH, assistant professor of nursing, in an interview with WROC Channel 8 on RochesterFirst.com, which points out that overall, only 4 percent of women at high risk of HIV take PrEP.

The study will be conducted in New York City and Rochester, two cities that lead the state in HIV rates.

“Our study will help to understand the multitude of reasons underlying these disparities and provide evidence to develop tailored HIV prevention interventions and services for women at risk,” said James McMahon, PhD, the lead investigator, in the press release.

For the study, researchers will enroll more than 300 women who either already take PrEP or are good candidates. Over the course of a year, the study will assess the participants’ adherence and views about PrEP.

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