

More Than Half of Medicaid-Insured Infants Born with HIV Had No Preventative Treatment

Antiretroviral therapy given to pregnant women and babies after birth can prevent mother-to-child HIV transmission.

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- More than half of Medicaid-insured infants diagnosed with HIV did not receive perinatal treatment, suggesting missed opportunities for preventing HIV transmission to infants.
- Perinatal antiretroviral prophylaxis can help prevent HIV infections in infants born to people with HIV.

More than half of infants insured through Medicaid who were diagnosed with HIV within one year of life did not receive postnatal antiretroviral prophylaxis, according to new findings presented at [IDWeek 2024](#).

The data are based on a population-based retrospective study using the MarketScan Multi-State Medicaid Database from 2009 to 2021 that identified antiretroviral drug use among infants. During the study period, 52 infants were infected with HIV, and among them, 27 (51.9%) did not receive postnatal prophylaxis.

Researchers say the results suggest undetected maternal infections.

“While testing and treatment regimens for perinatal and postnatal HIV prevention have evolved, continued evaluation of how they work in the real world is needed,” said Mingyue Lu, a PhD student in health policy and administration at the University of Illinois Chicago School of Public Health and presenting author. “Data suggest that clinicians are following national guidelines reasonably well. However, these highly effective interventions can be used only when maternal HIV infection is known. Therefore, efforts to minimize missed maternal HIV infection are crucial.”

The study is the first large-scale analysis of postnatal or perinatal prophylaxis use. It offers real-world data for postnatal and perinatal prophylaxis use to strengthen policy that addresses HIV diagnosis and treatment gaps.

In addition to Mingyue Lu, Kengo Inagaki, MD, associate professor of pediatrics and director of pediatric transplant infectious diseases at the University of Michigan, is a study co-author.

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