

# HIV AND CONCEPTION

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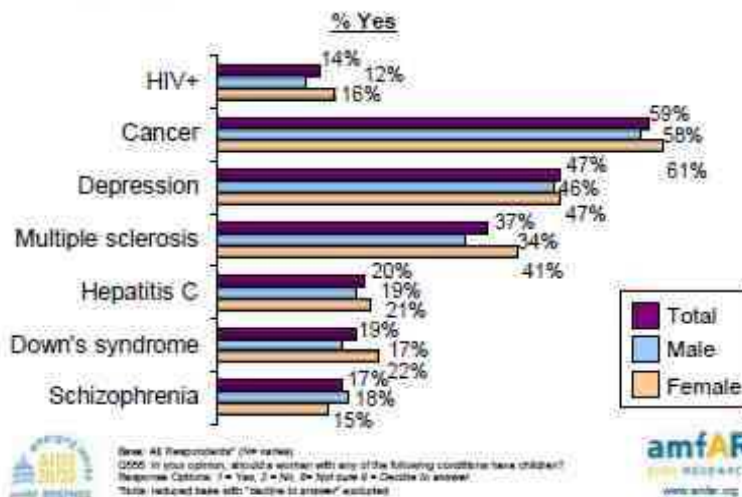
# THE MALE PERSPECTIVE

Chris O'Connor

## HIV and prospective parenting – between a rock and a hard place

- HIV and conception – still taboo?
  - Confusion and contradiction
    - The reality behind the advice
    - Fertility Clinics - little access or choice
  - Believe the science – asking the wrong question its not where's the risk? It's where is the transmission?
    - opportunity to inform
    - Where do we go now?

## Few Americans believe that HIV+ women should have children.



## PLWHIV Preconceptions around Conception

According to a 2009 study of 59 heterosexual men and women living with HIV in Birmingham:

- 5 believed it was not possible for HIV positive women to have HIV-negative children
- 8 thought that HIV positive women could not become pregnant without passing on HIV to their male partner
- Only 13 were aware that with medical intervention, the risk of transmitting HIV to the baby was 'very low'
- 15 thought HIV positive men could transmit HIV directly to their baby
- 28 thought if a woman started ARV therapy during pregnancy, the treatment would be lifelong
- Only 25 knew a caesarean section is not mandatory
- Only 29 knew breastfeeding is not recommended

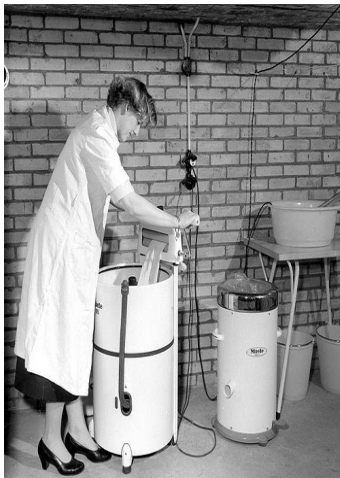
(Source: Jaya Suriay A et al, Directorate of Sexual Health and HIV, Birmingham Heartlands Hospital, 2009)

## Who starts the conversation?

- There are only a few such surveys on health care professionals attitudes. Recent research highlights the need for more open-ended, non-judgemental conversations about HIV and child-bearing.
- A study of 181 HIV positive women from two urban health clinics – only 31% had discussed their plans for conception with their health care providers.
- 64% of these discussions, had been initiated by the woman herself - not by the clinician
- “This is actually the best case scenario for what is happening in our country.” SF Kessler, University of Kansas

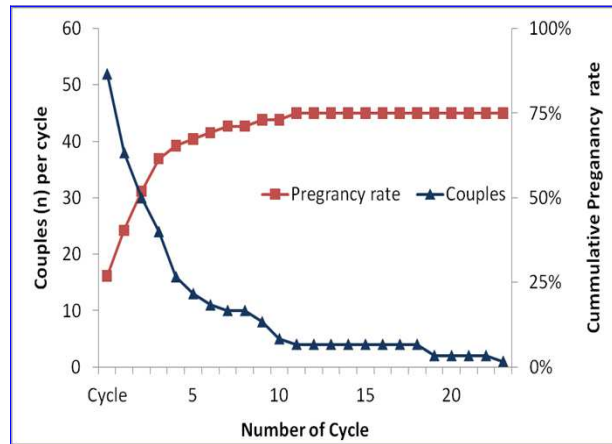
(Source Hadley Leggett, Beta, Winter/Spring 2011)

## Sperm Washing – reducing a zero risk?



- TWO EUROPEAN STUDIES SHOWED THAT THE PREGNANCY RATES PER INSEMINATION WITH WASHED SPERM WERE 14% AND 18% RESPECTIVELY (Ohi et al, 2003)
- RESTRICTED CHOICE, WAITING LISTS, STAFF SHORTAGES IN THE PAST
- EXPENSIVE
- INVASIVE
- TAKES A LONG TIME
- EVIDENCE THAT PEOPLE WITH HIV MAY BE AT AN INCREASED RISK OF INFERTILITY – SPERM WASHING FURTHER REDUCES CHANCES OF CONCEIVING

## Pregnancy rate HIV and PrEP



Source: Pietro Vernazza et al, AIDS 2011; 25(16)

HIV and Transmission risk under HAART:

## The Swiss (EKAF) Statement Jan 2008

EKAF WEITERE ORGANISATIONEN UND INSTITUTIONEN

### HIV-infizierte Menschen ohne andere STD sind unter wirksamer antiretroviraler Therapie sexuell übertragbar

#### Die HIV-Prävention wird einfacher – also komplexer!

**Pietro Vernazza**  
Präsident der Eidgenössischen Kommission für Aidsfragen EKAF

Ohne Dings kein Bums. Klipp und klar. Ebenso die heutige HIV-Präventionsbotschaft: 1. keine Penetration ohne Kondom; 2. kein Sperma in den Mund. Einfach – prägnant – effektiv. Und das Konzept funktioniert. Die Schweizerische HIV-Präventionskampagne – früher Stop AIDS, heute **Prävention ist alles** – ist seit 20 Jahren ein Vorbild für andere Länder. Aber 20 Jahre Erfahrung mit HIV haben ihre Botschaften nicht weniger wirksam gemacht. Im Gegenteil: Sie haben die Zahl der HIV-Infektionen in der Schweiz von über 1300 im Jahr 1986 auf heute etwa 1000 pro Jahr gesenkt. Das ist ein Erfolg, den wir uns nicht leisten dürfen, ihn zu vernachlässigen. Denn die Botschaften sind nicht nur für die Prävention, sondern auch für die Behandlung von HIV-Infektionen wichtig. Die Botschaften sind ein zentraler Bestandteil der HIV-Prävention und der Behandlung von HIV-Infektionen. Sie sind ein zentraler Bestandteil der HIV-Prävention und der Behandlung von HIV-Infektionen. Sie sind ein zentraler Bestandteil der HIV-Prävention und der Behandlung von HIV-Infektionen.

Wie gross ist die Zahl der HIV-Infektionen in der Schweiz? Die Zahl der HIV-Infektionen in der Schweiz ist seit 20 Jahren ein Vorbild für andere Länder. Aber 20 Jahre Erfahrung mit HIV haben ihre Botschaften nicht weniger wirksam gemacht. Im Gegenteil: Sie haben die Zahl der HIV-Infektionen in der Schweiz von über 1300 im Jahr 1986 auf heute etwa 1000 pro Jahr gesenkt. Das ist ein Erfolg, den wir uns nicht leisten dürfen, ihn zu vernachlässigen. Denn die Botschaften sind nicht nur für die Prävention, sondern auch für die Behandlung von HIV-Infektionen wichtig. Die Botschaften sind ein zentraler Bestandteil der HIV-Prävention und der Behandlung von HIV-Infektionen. Sie sind ein zentraler Bestandteil der HIV-Prävention und der Behandlung von HIV-Infektionen. Sie sind ein zentraler Bestandteil der HIV-Prävention und der Behandlung von HIV-Infektionen.

Vernazza et al, Schw. Aertzzeitung 30.1.08

When is the evidence safe enough?

## Is kissing an unsafe behavior?

PubMed Central  
BMJ helping doctors make better decisions

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Journal List > Br Med J (Clin Res Ed) > v.294(6578); Apr 18, 1987

Br Med J (Clin Res Ed). 1987 April 18; 294(6578): 1033. PMID: PMC1246191

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**HIV transmitted by kissing.**

J W Smith

In spite of the many close and sometimes intimate contacts taking place in the home between those susceptible and those who are infected, there is no epidemiological evidence that HIV has been transmitted by saliva.<sup>1 7 8</sup>

There is no reason to change the advice given to the government on how people should protect themselves from HIV infection.<sup>1</sup>

J W G SMITH

Public Health Laboratory Service,  
London NW9 5DF

## Sexual Transmission of HCV

bestimmte Seiten über die Menstruation auf

HEPATITIS C SUPPORT PROJECT  
www.hcvadvocate.org

hepatitis C  
**BASICS**

Sexual Transmission  
of Hepatitis C

Liz Highleyman

### Sex and HCV

Getting HCV by having sex does not happen very often. But we know that it is possible to give or get blood-borne viruses, like HCV, during sex.

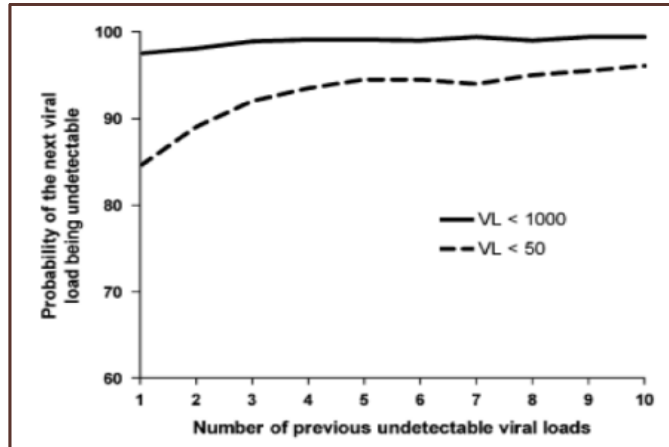
Most experts believe that 0-3% of straight people who have only had unprotected sex with only one steady sexual partner for a long time get HCV if their partner has HCV.

The most recent (2002) National Institutes of Health consensus statement said

People in long-term sexual relationships with one person do not have to change how they protect themselves during sex.

<http://www.hcvadvocate.org>

## Is “undetectable“ a stable condition?

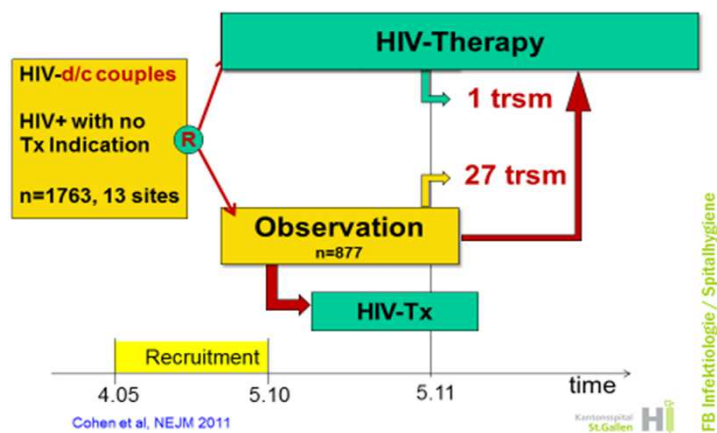


Source: Combesure, HIV Medicine, Sept 2009

## HPTN 052

HPTN 052:

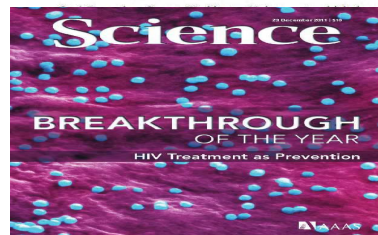
**The ultimate proof: RCT**



## TasP



### HIV Treatment as Prevention



...al load in blood predicts the  
...mission," they cautioned.  
...y of this year, the 052 clinical  
...by the HIV Prevention Trials  
...ed that ARVs reduced the risk  
...transmission by 96%. "Now  
...e, confirmed data," said Fauci  
...ference this summer in Rome  
...ers first presented  
...2 data in detail.  
...s the U.S. National  
...gy and Infectious  
...ain funder of the

The researchers planned to compare the groups until 2015. But on 28 April, an independent monitoring board that periodically reviewed the data stunned Cohen and his collaborators when it recommended that the results of the trial be made public as soon as possible. Of the 28 people who become infected with HIV that genetically matched the viruses in their long-term partners, only one was in the early treatment group—which also experienced 41% fewer serious health problems associated with HIV. Infected people in the delayed arm of the study were offered ARVs immediately. The HPTN 052 results and

Online  
sciemag.org  
For an expanded

December 23, 2011

## British HIV Association, BASHH and FSRH guidelines for the management of the sexual and reproductive health of people living with HIV infection 2008

HIV discordant couples where the male is infected who desire to eliminate or significantly reduce HIV transmission risk to their uninfected partner are limited to the following options:

- (1) Insemination using donor sperm:
- (2) Sperm washing
- (3) Adoption: this is a more difficult option for couples because current adoption practice regards HIV in one or both partners as a significant undesirable factor when assessing the suitability of parents requesting to adopt. Nevertheless, this is an approach that has been successful for some serodiscordant couples



### Chelsea and Westminster Assisted Conception Unit, website, 16.06.2015:

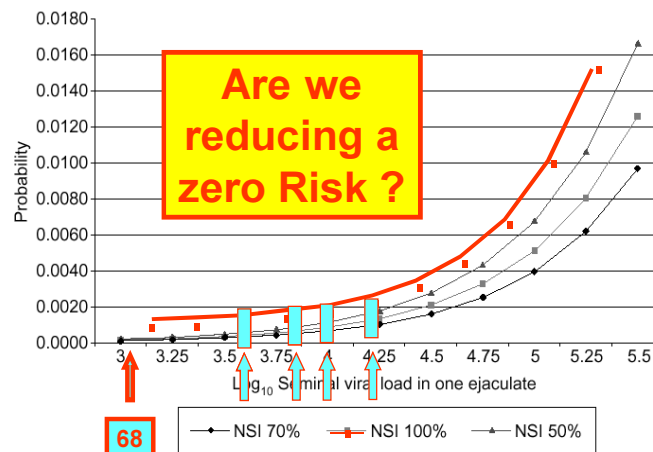
The medication used to treat HIV is now highly effective which has led some couples to ask about the safety of conceiving naturally. Unfortunately, even in men with negative viral loads, semen can still carry HIV, and therefore potentially infect the female partner.

**The risk of HIV transmission per act of unprotected intercourse from man to woman is still there and it is estimated to be 0.2% or 1 in 500 in couples.**

We therefore **strongly recommend** that couples wishing to conceive safely continue to have protected intercourse and use **sperm washing** as a safer alternative.

HIV-discordant couples in Insemination Program

### HIV-RNA in semen





## NICE guidelines [CG156] Published date: February 2013

### Fertility: Assessment and treatment for people with fertility problems

- Couples where the man is HIV positive
- If you are taking HIV drugs known as HAART the risk of infection during intercourse is minimal as long as all of these conditions are met: adherent, VL undetectable for six months, no STIs, limited to ovulation.
- If you can meet all the conditions in the list above, sperm washing may not reduce the risk of HIV infection any further. Sperm washing may also reduce the likelihood of becoming pregnant compared with natural conception.
- If you can meet all the conditions in the list above, NICE does not recommend also using 'pre-exposure prophylaxis' (PREP). This is because it has not been found to reduce the risk of infection any further.

MailOnline

## IVF clinics 'could carry risk of HIV'

by BEEZY MARSH, Daily Mail

Women undergoing IVF treatment are being put at risk of HIV infection, a leading fertility expert has warned.

Dr Carole Gilling-Smith, of Chelsea and Westminster Hospital in London, claims mothers and their children are subject to appalling safety lapses during treatment.

She said clinics were creating embryos for HIV-infected couples in the same laboratories as those used by healthy parents, raising the possibility of babies contracting Aids before they are born.

Women may also be exposed to HIV during egg collection if traces of the virus remained on equipment.

Dr Gilling-Smith, who runs a specialist fertility unit for HIV-positive men and women, sounded the alarm yesterday after a survey revealed just two out of 69 IVF clinics UK-wide which were treating HIV-positive men, women and couples had separate laboratories to care for them.

## HFEA stance on HIV couples

Suzy Leather HFEA chair, ' we cannot deny the right of people with HIV getting care.

## Planned or unplanned?

[J Acquir Immune Defic Syndr](#). 2013 Nov 20.  
**Unplanned Pregnancies among HIV-infected Women in Care - United States.**  
[Sutton MY, et al](#)

- 382 pregnancies reported 85% unplanned

[HIV Med](#). 2012 Feb;13(2):107-17. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-1293.2011.00946.x.  
**High prevalence of unintended pregnancies in HIV-positive women of reproductive age in Ontario, Canada: a retrospective study.**  
[Loutfy M, et al](#)

- 56% of last pregnancies unplanned

[HIV Med](#). 2011 Feb;12(2):118-23. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-1293.2010.00878.x.  
**Pregnancy in HIV-infected teenagers in London.**  
[Elqalib A, et al](#)

- 85% pregnancies unplanned (many diagnosed antenatally), with 12 months 25% pregnant again

## Conception Guidelines - some better practices

- Many countries have more up to-date guidance for clinicians
- Usually a larger heterosexual cohort, more demand for guidance on conception
- Need updating regularly eg The impact of START trial

### France

- Seven regional centres, government subsidized offering assisted conception
- Part of protocol: on diagnosis, clinician should discuss right and support to have children

### Germany

- Guidelines about to be written, but expected, they will include clear message on ART protected sex as the best way for couples without underlying fertility issues.

### Canada

- Task 1

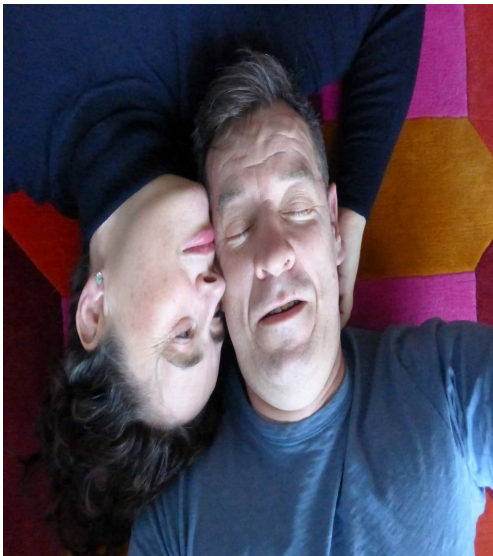
## Comite des Familles, France, weekly radio show, lobbying, publications, forums and support



## Positive couples – altruistic adherence

“Most people process complex information about risks and rewards every day of their lives. The life partners of people who take ARVs are among the best placed in the world to understand the consequences of perhaps becoming infected with HIV. Public health professionals don't need to treat them like idiots. Rather we should lay out the risks as accurately as we know how and let them decide for themselves.”

Elizabeth Pisani, Epidemiologist



Acknowledgement and thanks – Pietro Vernazza for slides and support and Caroline O'Connor, for everything

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