Women and HIV

HIV infection has become a chronic condition particularly for those patients compliant with treatment. In 2007, adult and adolescent women represented 27% of people living with HIV (1), that percentage is on the rise in the US and around the world (2). HIV-positive women face different challenges to remain in care and have successful outcomes. Published data shows that HIV-infected women have poorer virologic responses when compared to men who have sex with men (3). HIV + women have more show rates to appointments, which is likely due to gender roles, lower levels of education, pregnancies and higher rates of mental illnesses such as depression. Women living with HIV also are likely to be more non-compliant or have a higher rate of discontinuation in therapy due to adverse events and pill burden (2).

Immunologic<br>Women and HIV response

Even with improved techniques in diagnosis and many options available for antiretroviral treatment (ART), many of the HIV infected population is not receiving care. CDC recent data reports 41% of the 1.2 million people living with the disease in the US are aware of their diagnosis and are not receiving the appropriate treatment (1). Controversy still exists regarding virologic response in HIV-infected women. Most of the data are coming from registration trials with an underrepresentation of women. These studies showed a lower virologic suppression in women when compared to men. It has been reported that 1 in 4 women are not receiving ART (4). Providers were more likely to report self-discontinuation of treatment in women and the rate of lack of therapy was higher in African American women (2).

The primary objective of this study was to assess the response to treatment of HIV-infected women after antiretroviral initiation. The secondary objectives were to assess immunological recovery at one year and rate of modifications during that first year of antiretroviral treatment.