

PEER TO PEER

FACTSHEET | ISSUE 5

Rumor

"THE COMMUNITY IS QUICK TO JUDGE PEOPLE, SOME ARE SAYING WE ARE HIV POSITIVE ()and THAT IS WHY COVID-19 IS OUR PERENIAL VISITOR ."

Sunday Mail, 9 January 2022



What we know about the relationship between Covid-19 and HIV

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has noted the evolving and conflicting evidence on whether People Living with HIV (PLHIV) are at an increased risk of being infected with COVID-19 compared to the general population.

WHO notes that there have been several studies among hospitalized PLHIV with COVID-19 which have shown that PLHIV, particularly those with well controlled HIV infection, have comparable clinical outcomes and similar risk of being infected with SARS CoV2 when compared with the general population. WHO also notes the limited clinical data suggesting the mortality risk in PLHIV as being associated with known COVID-19 factors such as older age and presence of comorbidities including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease and obesity. On the other hand, WHO notes data from several cohort studies from South Africa, the USA and the UK that have reported a moderate increased risk of death directly attributed to HIV infection after adjustments for age, sex, ethnicity and presence of comorbidities.

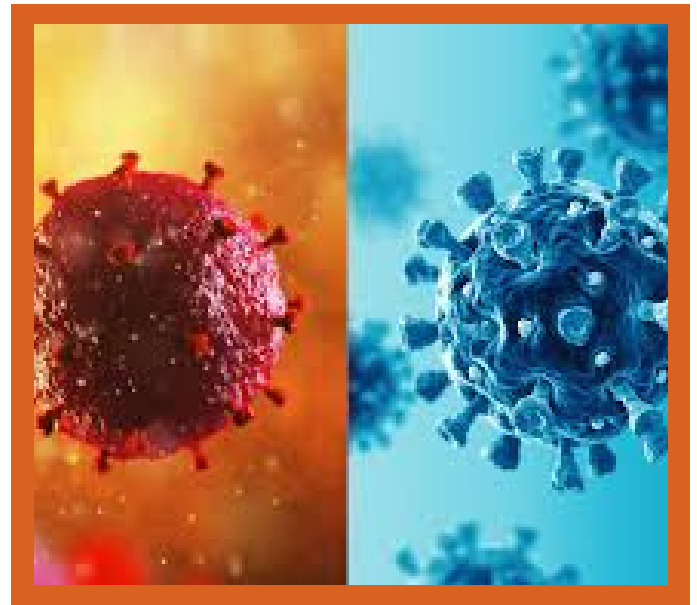
(<https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-hiv-and-antiretrovirals>)

§ The Center for Disease Control (CDC) also notes that it is “still learning about COVID-19 and how it affects people with HIV. Based on what we know at this time, people with HIV may be more likely to become severely ill from COVID-19.” The CDC highlights that other factors can contribute to PLHIV becoming severely ill, such as age and certain underlying medical conditions and that “older adults, people with certain medical conditions, and pregnant and recently pregnant people should take preventive actions (including getting vaccinated, wearing a mask, and practicing physical distancing) to protect themselves from getting COVID-19” (<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/covid-19.html>)

§ Conclusively, PLHIV are considered to be more prone to having risk factors that make them more vulnerable to being infected with COVID19 and having complications associated with COVID19, such as heart disease, kidney disease, diabetes, chronic pulmonary disease, obesity, as well as, other comorbidities and co-infections, like tuberculosis.

Information gaps

- Communities need to be conscientized on factors that may cause someone to test positive for COVID-19 repeatedly.
- Communities need to understand the extent to which PLHIV are at risk of contracting COVID-19 and other chronic diseases and factors contributing to such risks
- By probing information from news sources and corroborating it with evidence from reliable health information sources, media practitioners can help communities have a balanced view about the relationship between COVID-19 and HIV.



About Rootedin Trust

COVID-19 has created chaos and confusion around the world and put vulnerable communities in more danger. Providing accurate and relevant information about COVID-19 prevention, vaccines and new strains is imperative to protect lives of communities around the world that are already suffering from marginalisation, displacements, and insecurity. Rooted in Trust 2.0 is a global pandemic information response program countering the unprecedented scale and speed of the spread of rumors and misinformation. In Zimbabwe Rooted in Trust 2.0 is working with media, health, and humanitarian actors in ensuring that information disseminated is responsive to needs of communities in Southern Zimbabwe provinces of Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South, Midlands, Masvingo and Bulawayo. Focus is on marginalised communities usually excluded in mainstream media.