



Aids pills not taken

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It was hoped that it would be the solution to one of the world's worst pandemics and the end to a global scourge of death and disease.

But the study failed because most of the women participating in the trials, including at sites in KwaZulu-Natal, did not take the medication.

Disappointment and dismay have come in the wake of the announcement that one of the largest HIV prevention trials did not find the answers to contain the tide of HIV disease among the group most at risk – young women aged between 18 and 35.

However, researchers working on the three-year research programme told delegates at the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections in Atlanta on Monday that the work would continue.

"We will find the solutions we're looking for," they said.

The results announced from the trials showed that more than 70 percent of African participants in the trial did not take the medication as directed, even though they said they did.

The prevention regimens were a daily tenofovir tablet or a Truvada tablet, or daily use of the vaginal microbicide tenofovir gel.

The worst-affected area was found to be KZN, where more than 2 000 young women taking part in the trial were found to have not adhered to the regimen. This group, whose members were all HIV free at the beginning of the trial, had a 10 percent occurrence of HIV during the trial, the highest disease burden in the world.

The biggest shock is that the medication used in the three-year trial from September 2009 to August last year appears to have been rejected by almost half of the trial participants.

Among the main findings were that compared to their matched placebos, no product was effective in reducing the risk of HIV among the 5 007 women who were asked to use them daily.



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