


LETTER

Incidence of sexually transmitted infections during pre-exposure prophylaxis for HIV: a worrying outcome at 2 years!

Data on the occurrence of STIs among men who have sex with men (MSMs) who access pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) in France are lacking, especially about *Mycoplasma genitalium* (Mgen). We previously reported on the prevalence of STIs in a population who completed 1 year of PrEP at the Bordeaux University Hospital; prevalence of Mgen was 11% (9/89) in this study.¹ Here, we report findings from a prospective study conducted in our hospital from January 2016 to December 2017 that extend the data to 2 years of PrEP. Systematic testing for *Chlamydia trachomatis* (Ct), *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* (Ng), syphilis and Mgen was performed every 3 months on first void urine and anorectal and pharyngeal swabs using transcription-mediated amplification. Mgen-positive samples underwent testing for 23S rRNA mutations associated with macrolide resistance. Overall, 148 participants were enrolled, comprising 145 MSMs, 2 transgender subjects and 1 heterosexual woman, with a median age of 35 years.

At PrEP initiation, 51/148 participants (34.5%) had an STI. Prevalence rates were 11.5%, 10.8%, 6.1% and 13.5% for Ct, Ng, syphilis and Mgen, respectively. During follow-up, 104 new STIs were diagnosed. Incidence per 100 person-years was 89.8 overall and 21.6 for Ct (n=25), 22.5 for Ng (n=26), 12.1 for syphilis (n=14) and 24.2 for Mgen (n=28). At baseline and during follow-up, the anus was the most commonly infected site. Prevalence of Mgen macrolide resistance was 21/28 (75.0%), with 4 cases of resistance acquired after first-line azithromycin treatment. There is a high prevalence and incidence of STIs among MSMs accessing PrEP in France. Preventive measures should be enhanced. Mgen infections, including infections with drug-resistant Mgen, are common. Whereas systematic screening of Mgen is not currently recommended in PrEP programmes, the new BASHH guidelines recommend testing for symptomatic patients and their partners.²

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