

# Vaccines, Clinical Trials & B2B

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# Virology and Microbiology

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## Assessment of intestinal parasites and educational aspects as cofactors for transmission of HIV and progression to AIDS in Eastern Cape, South Africa

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Since the beginning of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, more than 70 million people have been infected with the HIV virus and about 35 million people have died due to complications to AIDS. Intestinal parasites are the most troublesome for AIDS patients and are widespread in many regions of the world where HIV/AIDS is also prevalent. It is at the core of this research not only to address the social and behavioral aspect of the illness but the medical and other aspects of the disease as well. This is a non-matched case-control study that comprises five hundred (500) participants: four hundred (400) HIV positive patients and one hundred (100) HIV negative patients as a control group. The study participants are HIV positive patients attending HIV clinics at Nelson Mandela Academic Hospital, Mthatha as well as rurally based participants. Intestinal parasites are believed to exert immunosuppression of the host by inducing permanent activation of the helper T-cells which may favor retroviral replications. The outcome of the research would demonstrate that the existence of an interaction between HIV and parasitic infections, particularly helminths, cause chronic immune activation, in addition to tilting the immune response toward T helper-2 immune responses. So much effort has been made to control and eradicate the scourge of HIV/AIDS globally. Scientists suspect that the AIDS virus usually cannot cause the disease by itself, but other factors usually help it to infect. These "Cofactors" do not cause AIDS but make it more likely that exposure to the virus will develop into the disease. The failure to prevent HIV is probably because the program ignores the fundamental causes of the epidemic. The program attempts to intervene at the last minute with limitations to behavioral change, ignoring the declining economies, aggravated health crisis, and direct biologic effects of unsanitary conditions on the vulnerability of individuals and society to HIV. Therefore, there is a need for a holistic approach which includes but not limited to fundamental causes of the epidemic.

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