

Pediatric HIV & prevention of parent to child transmission of HIV – An overview

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Though vertical transmission of HIV can be nearly eliminated, in the developing world it is highly unfortunate that still every minute an infected infant is said to be born, adding to the existing high numbers, making Pediatric HIV a looming problem that rapidly drains the already burdened health care system. The need of the hour is to find the most cost-effective and feasible intervention to achieve zero % transmission from an HIV infected mother to her child across the globe, with no disparity between geographic boundaries.

In India, approximately 55,000 - 115,000 children under 15 live with HIV and nearly 21,000 new infections occur in children annually.

Over the last three decades, though therapeutic strategies for the treatment of HIV infection in children has expanded dramatically, it has also added to the complexity in management of what is now a chronic, though still life-limiting illness. Though we have come a long way from the time of ignorance and hopelessness, the fact remains that we still lack the ability to truly save lives...at best, all advancement in care offer respite, not triumph, in the fight against AIDS.

As the world nears the completion of the third decade of the AIDS epidemic, several challenges remain:

- Eliminating mother to child transmission
- Early intervention in improving the ultimate outcome for infected children
- Making advances in science translate into practice
- Making interventions practical & accessible world wide
- Preventing new infections through universal education / awareness
- Development of a vaccine

Biography

Mamatha Lala completed her MBBS from Government Medical College, Bellary & her Post graduation in Pediatrics from the National Board of Examinations, India. Mamatha Lala, has been working as a Medical Advisor, Consultant Pediatrician & Pediatric HIV Specialist in various charitable hospitals & NGOs dedicated to caring for orphans & vulnerable children in & around Mumbai, India. A recipient of several awards & scholarships, she has undergone extensive training/Fellowships in various Centers of Excellence in her field from around the World. She has recently published a comprehensive care reference book – "Principles of Perinatal & Pediatric HIV/ AIDS", the first of it's kind from the Indian sub continent, addressing in depth the medical, social, psychological, legal & nursing issues of perinatal & pediatric HIV. She has a number of publications in reputed journals & presentations in various National & International Conferences.

An avid adventure sports enthusiast, she has recently returned from Antarctica having successfully completed the austral summer tenure of 6 months as part of the Indian Antarctic Scientific Expedition, Government of India, where she was adjudged the "Best Expeditioner". She has also won the trophy for winning 3rd place in the Raid de Himalaya Car Rally.

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