Title: The Unexpected Syndemic: HIV increases risk for Nutrition-Related Chronic Diseases

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Abstract (up to 500 words)

Fewer people globally are dying of HIV while more are living with low or undetectable viral loads for the duration of their lives. Living with chronic HIV, even at undetectable levels, increases one's risk for other nutrition-related chronic diseases (NRCDs) and obesity, a relationship still not well understood. South Africa continues to have the largest population of people living with HIV (PLHIV), with a majority of PLHIV being women, of which 2/3 are considered obese. The syndemic of high HIV, obesity, and biopolitical vulnerability of women in South Africa predisposes them for increase morbidity and mortality from NRCDs than men. Possible contributing factors to this syndemic are chronic inflammation, gut microbial translocation, ART-caused weight gain and metabolic changes, absence of breastfeeding, larger ideal body standards, and food insecurity. While massive test and treat initiatives are present in South Africa, little is being done to address this syndemic adequately. If increased nutrition and chronic disease interventions are not adopted along with standard HIV treatment, South Africa will be faced with a massive dual burden of disease, NRCDs along with HIV. Underlying mechanisms for this syndemic are analyzed and discussed; research and policy priorities are also established.

Biography (up to 150 words)

Courtney George is a current Master's of Public Health Nutrition- Registered Dietitian student at the University of North Carolina. Courtney is interested in the global, clinical, and research connections nutrition science has with other aspects of public health, especially concerning the dual burden of disease being currently experienced globally, but especially in low to middle income countries. Courtney is expected to graduate with her MPH-RD August 2020. This is Courtney's first research project in review for publication.

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