Background

Systematic data on the occurrence of pregnancy and outcomes of pregnancy among African women on combination antiretroviral therapy (ART) are scarce. 2161 of women were enrolled in the Ugandan/Zimbabwean DART trial of whom 1867(87%) were of child-bearing age: <45 years at enrolment; median age 35 years. No women were pregnant at enrolment into the trial.

Methods

Pregnancy tests were routinely performed every 6 months.

Data on follow up of mothers from Jan 2003 to June 2009 were used to analyze:
- Pregnancy incidence over time on ART
- Pregnancy incidence by maternal age
- Effect of baseline CD4 count & WHO stage on pregnancy rates

Results

- Median follow-up: 4.6 years
- 378 pregnancies in 299 women:
  - 1 pregnancy: 235
  - 2 pregnancies: 50
  - 3 pregnancies: 13
  - 4 pregnancies: 1

More than one or more pregnancies:
- 16% women aged <45 years
- 33% women aged >30 years

Overall pregnancy rate in women < 45 years of age:
- 4.83 / 100 woman-years [95% CI 4.36-5.34]

Conclusions & recommendations

- Pregnancy rates in this population of HIV-infected African women increased after the 1st year on ART and declined from the 4th year on ART.
- Rates of pregnancy were higher among the younger age group and among women with less severe HIV clinical disease.
- High rates of foetal loss were observed and are constant over time. This may be due to improved reporting in the clinical study setting; however, increased foetal loss in HIV-infected women has been reported in other studies.
- Rates of congenital abnormalities in this study are low and similar to those previously reported.
- Few women in DART chose to breastfeed.
- No baby from this cohort is known to be HIV-infected.

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