Barriers of Participation in HIV Vaccine Trials
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One goal of HIV vaccine preparedness studies (VPS) is to measure barriers of participation in HIV vaccine trials.

Knowledge of these perceived barriers may inform recruitment strategies in an HIV vaccine trial.

Psychological barriers to participation can be classified in terms of their locus (personal and social) and nature (risks and costs). Risks and costs are hallmarks of the Health Belief Model (Becker, 1974).

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS
- Barriers — psychological factors that may dissuade someone from participating in a vaccine trial.
- Risks — barriers that potentially may occur as a result of participation.
- Costs — barriers that would definitely occur as a result of participation.

OBJECTIVES
- Categorize psychological barriers to participation in an HIV vaccine trial.
- Develop a conceptual model to further our understanding of psychological barriers to participation in an HIV vaccine trial.

Material and Methods
- In this study, a distinction is made between the organization for economic co-operation and development (OECD) countries and the non-OECD countries. The non-OECD countries generally feature lower per-capita income, often with a higher prevalence and incidence of HIV than found in the OECD countries.
- For the OECD countries, search terms were: “HIV”, “vaccine preparedness”, “HIV vaccines”, “barriers”, and the 30 OECD countries. Additional search terms for the non-OECD countries were “developing country” and “non-OECD”.

RESULTS

EXAMPLES OF PERSONAL RISKS TO PARTICIPATION IN AN HIV TRIAL (most frequently cited form of barrier)
- Vaccine safety
- Antibody-induced seropositivity
- Side effects from placebo
- Problems with travel to foreign countries
- Effects on insurance

EXAMPLES OF SOCIAL RISKS
- Discrimination/stigma
- Avoiding sex or social contact
- Cultural or religious issues
- Effect on marriage

EXAMPLES OF PERSONAL COSTS
- Logistic factors
- Frequent blood draws
- Fear of needles
- Not able to donate or sell blood

EXAMPLES OF SOCIAL COSTS
- Difficulty managing family commitments

BARRIERS IN THE FORM OF MISCONCEPTIONS
- The possibility of receiving an untested vaccine
- Violations of confidentiality
- Ethics of the study not vetted

NUMBER OF STUDIES CITING BARRIER TYPES

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INTRODUCTION

Material and Methods

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SUMMARY

- Perceived personal risks, especially in the form of concerns for safety issues, were the most often cited barriers to participation in an HIV trial.
- Antibody-induced seropositivity is a significant perceived risk.
- Perceptions of personal risks were similar for the OECD and non-OECD countries.

LIMITATIONS
- Studies reviewed featured a range of data collection methods.
- We did not draw a distinction between hypothetical and actual trial participation.
- The distinction between “risk” and “misconception” is a subjective one. For example, “distrust of institutions” was categorized as a risk rather than assuming institutions (academic, governmental, medical) to be widely trustworthy.

CONCLUSIONS

- Consistent with the Health Belief Model, perceptions of risk and costs relate to perceived threat and effectiveness of an action to deal with that threat. Recruitment to HIV trials must address both of these elements directly, both to reduce participation barriers and to obtain properly informed consent.
- In vaccine trials, the informed consent procedure should address antibody-induced seropositivity.

FUTURE RESEARCH

- Barriers to retention should also be reviewed and categorized.
- Studies are required to assess the effective of interventions to address misconceptions and adequate informed consent.
- Further studies should assess perceived probability of a risk occurring.