

## **Fears of Mother-Child Transmission Amongst HIV Positive Biological Women**

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For many in western societies, having a child has become a less expected social norm. Within these societies, those who choose to have children do so understanding the various challenges and efforts required such as conception, nutrition, abstinence from toxins, and birth. As shown by Montgomery, amongst HIV positive women there exists an underlying concern of transmission to their unborn child. Assuming that the mother is aware of their HIV status prior to conception, she must come to terms with the significant difference of medical action she will receive during her pregnancy. With tools such as Amniocentesis or CVS not given to HIV positive expecting mothers, some HIV positive women may choose to not conceive.

The effect this can have on a marriage or committed relationship may be substantial, if both partners entered the relationship unaware of their HIV status on an agreement that they both wanted biological children. While many modern alternatives to childbirth exist, the inability to naturally conceive can be seen as a deal-breaker for relationships, adding an increasing stigma to young-women who test positive for the chronic condition. If they have settled down and mutually found a life-partner who is expecting to have children in the near future, sharing of a positive HIV status may bring with it a severe change in their life. Additionally, they would have the knowledge that if their relationship did end, they would be reentering the romantic social scene with a stigmatized chronic condition. The diagnosis of HIV in women who have an interest in childbirth can have a substantially negative effect on their romantic lives.

## References

- Montgomery, K. S. (2003). Childbirth education for the HIV-positive woman. *The Journal of Perinatal Education*, 12(4), 16–26. <https://doi.org/10.1891/1058-1243.12.4.16>