

## New HIV Infection Cases 25,000 Per Year

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Yogyakarta Health Agency recorded the number of people with HIV/AIDS since 1993 until September 2015 reached 3,147 with the majority being men at the age between 20 - 49.

dr. Yanri Wijayanti Subronto, PhD, SpPD, FINASIM, internal disease lecturer, Faculty of Medicine UGM, said preventive efforts against HIV virus contraction need to continue to suppress new infection cases. Indonesia reportedly has the highest prevalence in Southeast Asia.

"Despite the new treatment program can already suppress the death rates under 2% due to HIV/AIDS, but new infections are still high at 20-25 thousands per year," said the Head of Edelweis polyclinic at Dr. Sardjito general hospital on Tuesday (1/12).

Preventive programmes are, therefore, need to be stepped up to suppress such increase through education to people so they know the risks of HIV/AIDS since early age. In his opinion, it was important to identify the risk and status of HIV. "There are 1,500 HIV test centres across the country," he said.



To support the treatment programme, HIV-positive people should undergo free antiretroviral (ARV) therapy to increase the stamina, thus reducing risks and increasing survival and quality of life. "There are 500 hospitals in Indonesia for ARV referrals," he said.

Another barrier in the HIV/AIDS prevention is the discrimination and negative stigma of people with HIV/AIDS. Of 1,700 cases, only 630 patients undergo treatment because they were ashamed of their disease.

"Only one third undergo therapy regularly, the rest have died due to delayed therapy, discontinued therapy due to impatience of the long treatment, and unwanting to do therapy due to shame," he said.

To address this disease, the role of everyone is required. People already infected have to get ARV therapy immediately and prevent contracting it to others while the wider public need to have accurate information on HIV whilst not discriminating those already infected.

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