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HIV in women-elderly

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The objective of this study is to identify the factors associated with the vulnerability of the women aged 60 years or more to HIV/AIDS, based on in-depth interviews aiming to understand aspects of epidemic HIV/AIDS among the aged women in Belo Horizonte, addressing aspects related to the epidemiologic and individual context; and verify the perceptions and behaviors of older women related to HIV/AIDS. The study universe were the older women living with the virus, treated at Hospital Eduardo de Menezes da Fundação Hospitalar do Estado de Minas Gerais. Interviews with 12 older women, who signed a consent form and were considered mentally fit were performed. The aged interviewed showed low level of education, low income, some women were in marital union, and have perceptions and behaviors grounded in structural gender relations with asymmetry of power, therefore, showing low responsiveness to vulnerability. Most aged interviewed are sexually active,

but few of them declared to protect themselves by using condoms. Adherence to antiretroviral therapy has close relation with the way of contracting the virus: aged women who were betrayed have a poor adherence to the ART and are angry and depressed. Regarding the programmatic level, many aged highlighted that they have never seen a program focused on their generation, and the lack of information reaches all levels of vulnerability. The picture revealed by this study is worrying because, despite the fact that demographic dynamics and the aging population have already been incorporated into discussions, elderly have been considered as asexual beings. It is expected, in this sense that, this study can help to demystify the sexual invisibility of the aged, ensuring them a healthy and continuous sexual life, what is rightfully theirs.

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