



A GREAT PLACE TO MAKE A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE


SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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THE NEW YORK TIMES NEW YORK, MONDAY, MARCH 8, 1993

Doctors Withhold H.I.V. Pill Regimen From Some

Failure to Follow Rigid Schedule Could Hurt Others, They Fear

By DEBORAH SONTAG and LYNDIA RICHARDSON

LYNDIA RICHARDSON, an HIV-infected woman who has H.I.V., is often asked for advice about her condition. She does not usually make the time to do so, but she is often asked to write articles, believing that a regimen only a "minor adjustment" in her everyday life. So she often returns to her apartment and fails to read the newspaper.

Though her Medicaid coverage, she says, she says to the clinic, can afford the costly new drugs that might help her progress toward AIDS, but her doctor will not give her the pills. She does not believe that she can follow the rigid, 24-hour-a-day, 7-days-a-week, drug-taking regimen, in which missing even a single pill means some punishment, and she says she is afraid to lose her Medicaid coverage.

"I don't trust her ability to stick to a schedule," said Dr. Thomas Coombs, a physician at the New York University School of Medicine's H.I.V. clinic in Manhattan.

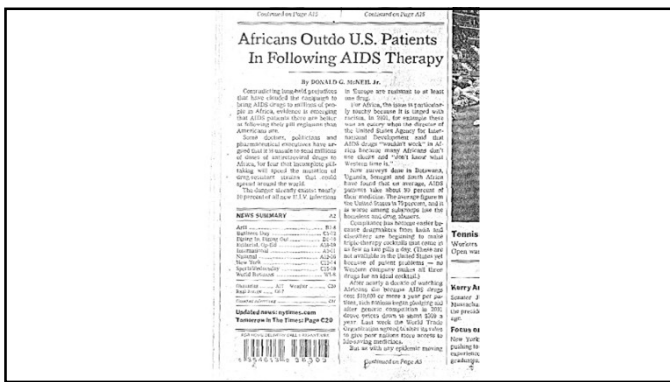
With the early success of drug, doctors have set a new class of drug called protease inhibitors, which are more powerful than the first generation of drugs. But they are also more expensive, and they have the same side effects as the first generation. In New York State, which has the most comprehensive drug assistance program in the nation, coverage is denied for the new AIDS drugs.

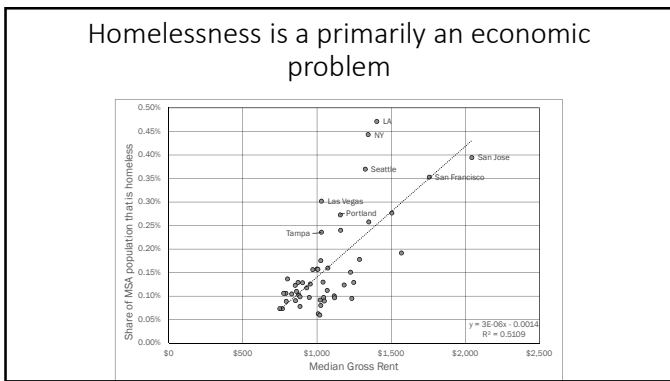
Dr. Coombs says that the new drugs are not the answer for everyone.



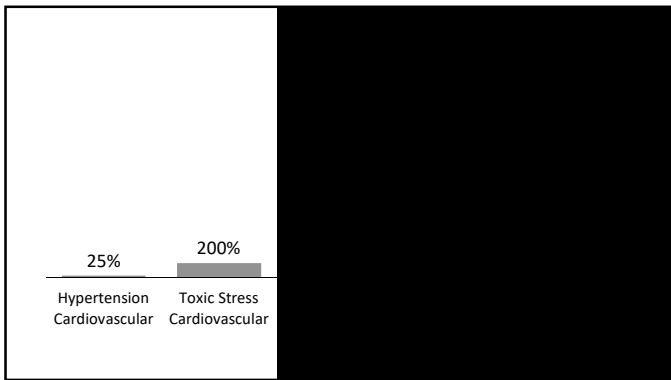
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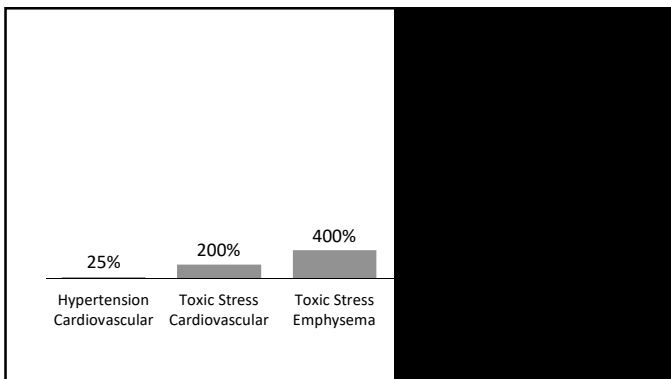


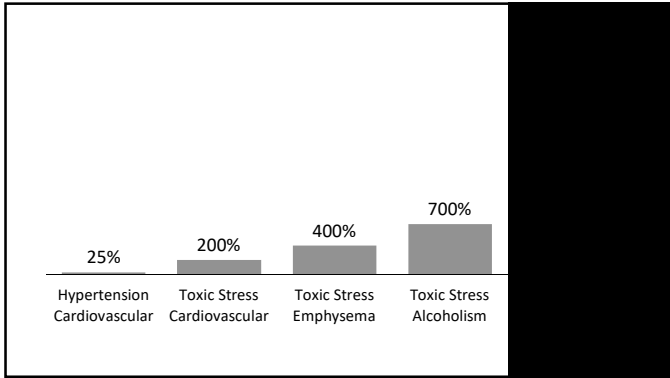


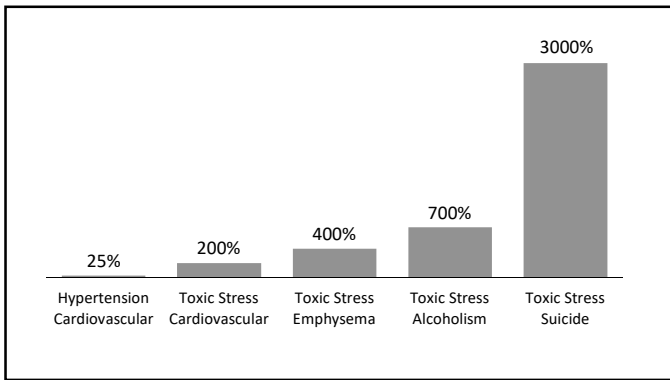












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