

AIDS-Related Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma in Sub-Saharan Africa: Current Status and Realities of Therapeutic Approach

Abstract:

Today AIDS-related non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (AR-NHL) is a significant cause of morbidity and mortality in HIV-infected patients the world over, and especially in sub-Saharan Africa. While the overall incidence of AR-NHL since the emergence of combination antiretroviral therapy (cART) era has declined, the occurrence of this disease appears to have stabilized. In regions where access to cART is challenging, the impact on disease incidence is less clear. In the resource-rich environment it is clinically recognized that it is no longer appropriate to consider AR-NHL as a single disease entity and rather treatment of AIDS lymphoma needs to be tailored to lymphoma subtype. While intensive therapeutic strategies in the resource-rich world are clearly improving outcome, in AIDS epicenters of the world and especially in sub-Saharan Africa there is a paucity of data on treatment and outcomes. In fact, only one prospective study of dose-modified oral chemotherapy and limited retrospective studies with sufficient details provide a window into the natural history and clinical management of this disease. The scarcities and challenges of treatment in this setting provide a backdrop to review the current status and realities of the therapeutic approach to AR-NHL in sub-Saharan Africa. More pragmatic and risk-adapted therapeutic approaches are needed.