

Delayed recovery of adrenocortical and testicular function after chemotherapy of human trypanosomiasis.

Abstract:

The following indicators of pituitary, adreno-cortical and testicular function were measured in 58 male African trypanosomiasis patients from Western Kenya; plasma cortisol, luteinizing hormone (LH) and testosterone levels. The measurements were carried out by specific radioimmunoassay methods in early and late stage infected patients on admission to hospital and in both groups of patients after one month of chemotherapy. Packed cell volume (PCV) and hemoglobin levels were also measured in all the patients to determine the extent of their anaemia and success of recovery. High parasitaemia, anaemia and clinical symptoms of human trypanosomiasis were found in the infected patients and were eliminated with chemotherapy in the infected/treated patients. Increased levels of cortisol and decreased concentrations of testosterone without significant changes in LH levels were evident in the infected patients; this condition remained unchanged even after one month of chemotherapy. Evidence is thus provided of persistent hormonal perturbations which probably indicate residual endocrine organ damage.