

## **Abstract**

patients with autoimmune thrombocytopenic purpura (AITP) seen in Zimbabwe between January 1980 and December 1987 are presented. There was a female preponderance (male to female ratio of 1:1,9); and the mean age +/- s.d. was 18.1 +/- 14.5 (range 0.5 to 59) years. Seventy nine per cent of the acute AITP patients presented within the first decade of life; whilst 25% and 75% of the chronic AITP cases were seen below and above ten years respectively. Epistaxis was the commonest form of presentation; occurring in 70% of all cases. Platelet counts considered to be in the potentially dangerous level i.e. less than  $40-50 \times 10^9/l$  were respectively found in 92% and 82% of the acute and chronic cases. The disease is not rare in Zimbabwe and presents with a picture identical with that previously described in Caucasian and other African populations.