during early HIV-1 infection are similar in subtype C- and non-subtype C-infected African seroconverters.

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Abstract

Recent data suggest that infection with human immunodeficiency virus type 1 (HIV-1) subtype C results in prolonged high-level viremia (>5 log10 copies/mL) during early infection. We examined the relationship between HIV-1 subtype and plasma viremia among 153 African seroconverters. Mean setpoint viral loads were similar for C and non-C subtypes: 4.36 vs 4.42 log10 copies/mL (P = .61). The proportion of subtype C-infected participants with viral loads >5 log10 copies/mL was not greater than the proportion for those with non-C infection. Our data do not support the hypothesis that higher early viral load accounts for the rapid spread of HIV-1 subtype C in southern Africa.