

Abstract

Routine screening of cornea donors for human immunodeficiency virus type 1 (HIV-1) has been established and has reduced the risk of HIV-1 transmission to a minimum. Screening for HIV-2 is less common. We evaluated 100 cornea donors for HIV-2 and 166 cornea donors for HIV-1 according to our routine screening procedure. Enzyme-linked immunosorbent assays (ELISAs) with high sensitivity were used to detect antibodies in donor blood. HIV-2 seroconversion was not found in any of the 100 cases tested, whereas HIV-1 seroconversion was detected in 4 of 166 cases; consecutive Western-blot analysis showed only 1 positive result. Thus, 1 of 166 cases (0.6%) had to be considered infected with HIV-1. Our findings of HIV-1 seroprevalence are comparable with those obtained in studies carried out in Europe and the United States. Data are lacking for comparison with our results concerning HIV-2 seroprevalence. Because of the epidemiologic situation of HIV-2 in Europe, different seroprevalence rates would be expected. Routine screening of potential cornea donors for HIV-2 in Germany may be necessary only if the seroprevalence rises in the population.