Abstract:

The efficacy and safety of a single daily dose of sodium stibogluconate, 20 mg/kg body weight, given by deep intramuscular injection was compared with the conventional dose of 10 mg Sb/kg body weight in a randomised trial in Kenyan children and adults with visceral leishmaniasis. Splenic aspiration proved a safe and simple method for assessing parasitological response to treatment. In children the higher dose was associated with a faster clinical and parasitological response, and 100% were cured within 4 weeks, compared with 60% receiving the lower dosage. This difference is statistically significant by life-table analysis ($\chi 2=4 \cdot 41$, $p<0 \cdot 05$). The superiority of the higher dose was not, however, seen in adults. In both children and adults the higher dose given daily for 2-4 weeks and in one patient for up to 7 weeks was found to be safe and well tolerated. It is likely, but not proven, that the use of sodium stibogluconate in a dose of 20 mg/kg bw daily for 4 weeks will reduce the relapse-rate in Kenyan children with visceral leishmaniasis.