

Kaposi's sarcoma in patients with and without human immunodeficiency virus infection, in a tertiary referral centre in Kenya

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Abstract:

The clinical features of Kaposi's sarcoma (KS), in patients with and without HIV infection, were investigated in a tertiary referral centre in Kenya between 1997 and 1999. Although 186 cases were identified prospectively, the data analysis was restricted to the 91 (49%) cases who had pathological confirmation of Kaposi's sarcoma and documented HIV serostatus. Among these 91 subjects (58% of whom were male), the age-group holding the largest number of KS cases was that of individuals aged 31–40 years; most of the paediatric cases were aged 6–10 years. The ratio of HIV-seropositives to HIV-seronegatives was 8.5:1 for the adult cases and 0.9:1 for the paediatric. Of the signs and symptoms of Kaposi's sarcoma seen at presentation, only peripheral lymphadenopathy was found to be significantly associated with underlying HIV infection ($P = 0.05$). The median survival was 104 days. It is apparent that, as the HIV epidemic advances in regions of the world with endemic KS, the clinical presentation and natural history of the endemic KS are blending with those of the epidemic or AIDS-associated disease, leading to a reduction in the mean age of the cases and a nearly identical incidence in men and women. In regions of the world where patients have ready access to such chemotherapy, the impact of treatment with highly active antiretroviral drugs on the incidence and natural history of KS has been dramatic. It will be important to monitor the clinico-pathological features of KS in the developing world, as more active antiretroviral regimens become available in clinical practice there.