

Abstract:

The mechanisms by which anti-phospholipid antibodies (aPLs) may induce pregnancy losses, intrauterine growth retardation and pregnancy-induced hypertension are not clearly understood. Moreover, there is a controversy regarding the possible direct effects of these antibodies on the physiology of the placenta since the target antigens of these antibodies are intracellular antigens and are potentially inaccessible to the antibody. Also, controversy exists regarding the usefulness of the treatment regimens currently available. In this study, we present preliminary data on the prevalence of aPLs in a selected population (n = 80) of Kenyan women visiting Kenyatta National Hospital, Nairobi, Kenya for obstetrical complications including recurrent pregnancy losses. Our results showed approximately 13.8% of the patients were positive for anti-cardiolipin antibodies whereas 33.8% were positive for aPS. Additionally, we screened 72 non-human primates for presence of aPLs and our results showed that the olive baboon (*Papio anubis*) had the highest prevalence rate (52.2%, n = 23). Overall, our results suggest that the olive baboon may be a suitable animal model for studying the mechanism of action of the anti-phospholipid antibody and pregnancy complications associated with aPLs.