

**THE SEROPREVALENCE OF HHV8 IN THE HAART NAÏVE HIV
PATIENTS AT KENYATTA NATIONAL HOSPITAL COMPREHENSIVE
CARE CLINIC**

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DECLARATION

I certify that this dissertation is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree to any other University.

Signed

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ABSTRACT

Background; The HIV/AIDS pandemic is one of the leading health challenges in the world and Kenya today. Kaposi's sarcoma is the leading neoplasia in HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa and is an AIDS defining illness. Human Herpesvirus 8 is the causative organism of this neoplasia. The interaction of HHV8 with HIV is critical in the development of the neoplasia and other HHV8 associated illnesses. HAART and the reversal of immunosuppression has been shown to be the best option of treating and preventing diseases associated with HHV8. The seroprevalence of HHV8 in the HIV patients is not very well studied in Kenya.

Objectives; To determine the seroprevalence of HHV8 and its associated factors in the HAART naïve HIV patients attending the Kenyatta National Hospital Comprehensive Care Clinic (CCC).

Study design; Cross sectional descriptive survey

Materials and Methods; three hundred and seventy eight (378) HAART naïve HIV patients were recruited consecutively from the Kenyatta National Hospital Comprehensive Care Clinic between December 2010 and April 2011. Demographic and behavioral data was collected using a pretested structured questionnaire. HHV8 serology and CD4 counts from collected blood was determined by use of the ABI HHV8 immunoglobulin G antibody Elisa method and CyFlow respectively.

Data management; Accrued data was entered and analyzed using in SPSS version 17.

Results; The seroprevalence of HHV8 was 54.4%. Seropositivity was associated with male gender and a low CD4 of < 350 cells/mm³ on the multivariate analysis. OR 1.90 [1.21-2.99, 95% CI] and OR 1.88 [1.18-2.99, 95% CI] respectively

Seropositivity was not related to other demographic or behavioral factors.

Conclusion; The seroprevalence of HHV8 is high in this population.