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Intestinal parasitic infections in HIV-positive individuals on HAART and HAART naïve accessing healthcare in a Federal Medical Centre in Nigeria

[1]Pennap Grace, [2]Yako A and [1]Ajegena AA
[1]Microbiology Unit, Nasarawa State University, Nigeria
[2]Zoology Unit, Nasarawa State University, Nigeria

Intestinal parasitic infections (IPIs) in HIV-positive individuals have been widely reported as a significant cause of morbidity and mortality all over the world. However, IPIs in such individuals have not been studied in this part of Nigeria. This study was therefore a baseline survey of the prevalence of intestinal parasites among HIV positive individuals in Central Nigeria. A total of 200 consenting HIV positive individuals were recruited for the study. Of these, 100 were on Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy (HAART) and 100 were HAART naïve. Stool specimens collected were analyzed for the presence of enteric parasites. The overall prevalence of infection was 88.5% with 11 types of parasites detected. IPIs that occurred with a prevalence of ≥ 20% include: Entamoebahistolytica, Ascarislumbricoides, Ancylostomaduodenales, TaeniasppandStrongylidesstercoralis. Helminth infections were more common (51.5%) than protozoan infections (37%) and there were more mixed (64.5%) than single (23%) infections. The prevalence of IPIs was not associated with HAART. This study reports the high burden of IPIs among HIV infected individuals in Central Nigeria. It is recommended that routine screening for intestinal parasites be included in the healthcare management of HIV patients.

rinmecit.grace@yahoo.com