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Human immunodeficiency virus co-infection with hepatitis B and C viruses among Nigerian children accessing an antiretroviral treatment program in Northern Nigeria

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Nigeria has the largest burden of children living with HIV in the world but because of antiretroviral therapy, they are living longer. However, hepatitis B and C viruses are emerging important comorbidities to consider especially for management decisions. This study set out to determine the prevalence of hepatitis B and C viruses among these children and to identify possible risk factors associated with the infections. Two hundred HIV-infected children at an antiretroviral treatment center were screened for Hepatitis B and C seromarkers using rapid test kits (ABCON Laboratories Hangzhou China). Information on their sociodemographics and exposure to some possible risk factors were obtained. A general prevalence of infection with hepatitis B or C virus in the study population was 14.0%. The prevalence of HIV/HBV was 3.0% while HIV/HCV was 11.0% and no child was coinfecting with all 3 viruses. There was no statistically significant association between coinfection with either of the hepatitis viruses and the studied parameters. The HIV/HBV and HIV/HCV coinfection prevalence of 3.0% and 11.0% respectively is a cause for alarm. HIV infected children should be screened for these viruses before commencement of Antiretroviral therapy.

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