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## Initiation of antiretroviral therapy in HIV-infected adults with skin complaints in northern Tanzania

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Abnormal skin findings are identified in over 90% of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) - infected persons globally. A prospective cohort study of HIV-infected subjects presenting with skin complaints in northern Tanzania was undertaken. Consecutive HIV- infected subjects presenting with skin complaints, who met criteria for ART initiation, were recruited at a Tanzanian Regional Dermatology Training Center. A single dermatologist evaluated all subjects; baseline skin biopsies were performed, and CD4+ cell counts and plasma HIV RNA levels were measured. All subjects received a fixed – dose combination of stavudine, lamivudine, and nevirapine. A total of 100 subjects were enrolled; 86 subjects completed six months of follow-up. Median baseline CD4+ cell counts and plasma HIV RNA levels were 120 cells/ul and 5.2 log<sub>10</sub> copies/ml. The most common dermatological condition was papular pruritic eruption (47%). The median baseline score on the burn scale was 38%. After six months, 10 subjects had achieved the complete resolution of the skin abnormalities. In those without complete resolution, the median Burn Scale score improved to 7%. Five patients developed new eruptions by month 3, which in two cases were attributed to drug reactions. In the 86 subjects remaining on ART after the six months, the median CD4+ cell count had increased to 474 cells/ul and plasma HIV RNA levels were <400 copies/ml in 85 ( 99%) subjects. Patients with HIV infection with skin complaints experienced marked clinical improvements following ART initiation.

### Biography

Daudi Rajabu Mavura is the current principal of the Regional dermatology training center (RDTC) in Moshi, Tanzania where he also lectures. The RDTC is a tertiary training institute of both The Tumaini University and Muhimbili University of Health sciences. Dr. Mavura holds a Medical Degree from the University of Carlos J. Finlay in Cuba and a Masters of Medicine degree from the Tumaini University. He has subspecialised in dermatosurgery from UKT-Germany and the Univesida de alcala de Henare in Spain. He has published and co-authored several papers mostly in tropical dermatology. He is fluent in English, Spanish and his native Kiswahili.

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