AUDIO-VESTIBULAR FUNCTION IN HIV INFECTED PATIENTS IN INDIA

Suma Susan Mathews, Rita Ruby Albert, Anand Job
Department of ENT, Christian Medical College, Vellore, India.

ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE:
As the Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) epidemic shows no signs of abating, the impact of AIDS is felt more in the developing countries due to socioeconomic reasons. We sought to determine if there was a difference between the audio-vestibular function in the asymptomatic Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infected patients and patients with AIDS.

STUDY DESIGN:
A prospective cross sectional study

SETTING:
A Tertiary Care Centre in South India

SUBJECTS & METHODS:
A prospective cross sectional study in a tertiary care setting.

AV system of three groups were studied using Pure Tone Audiometry (PTA) and Modified Kobrak’s test.

GROUP-1: AUDIOGRAM RESULTS IN HIV ASYMPOTOMATIC GROUP

GROUP-2: AUDIOGRAM RESULTS IN AIDS PATIENTS

GROUP-3: AUDIOGRAM RESULTS IN CONTROLS

RESULTS:

Hearing loss in AIDS patients is probably multi-factorial like usage of ototoxic medications, CNS opportunistic infections, malignancy and others like AIDS encephalopathy.

Sensorineural Hearing loss found in about 50% asymptomatic HIV positive subjects (group 1) and 30 subjects with AIDS (group 2) and age matched 30 healthy controls (group 3) were assessed using pure tone audiometry and cold caloric test.

RESULTS:

Sixteen patients each, in group 1 and group 2 and four subjects in the control group were detected to have a hearing loss indicating significantly more HIV infected individuals (group 1 and 2) were having hearing loss than (p<0.001) the control group (p=0.001).

Group 1- 30 asymptomatic HIV positive subjects.
Group 2- 30 subjects with AIDS.
Group 3- 30 age matched healthy controls.

CONCLUSIONS:

• The HIV virus being neurotropic can affect the auditory and vestibular pathway.

• Majorit of the patients may not complain of hearing loss, giddiness or tinnitus.

• It could be unilateral or bilateral, and the hearing loss could be conductive, sensorineural or mixed.

• Long term follow up studies are needed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors acknowledge the Department of Otorhinolaryngology for the secretarial help.

REFERENCES


