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SEROEPIDEMIOLOGY OF HTLV-I IN IVORY COAST

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\*Department of Virology, Limoges, France, \*\* Pasteur Institut and INSP, Abidjan, Ivory Coast, \*\*\* Department of Virology, Tours, France,\*\*\*\*, University of Dakar, Dakar, Senegal. Objective : To evaluate the HTLV-I prevalence and to identify risk groups in Ivory Coast.

Methods : Approximatively 3000 sera from different groups (symptomless individuals, prostitutes, hospitalized patients, prisoners, etc ... ) and several region of Ivory Coast were tested for antibody to HTLV-1 by a indirect immunofluorescence assay using the HUT 102 B2 cell line. The confirmations of doubtful and positive sera were obtained by Western blot using the same HTLV-I strain.Sera were considered as positive for antibody to HTLV-I when reactive to the gag encoded proteins p19 and p24.

Results : The prevalence in the healthy adult population was 1.6 % (1.5 % for the males and 1.7 % for the females), with the same prevalence in either rural (1.7 %) or urban area (1.5 %). The prevalence in the prostitutes groups varied from 5.7 % to 10.5 % in three areas and was decreasing with increasing socioeconomic level. The prevalences for diabetic patients and transfused patients with sickle cell anemia were 1.8 % and 3.8 %, respectively. The seroprevalence for patients with tuberculosis was 3.8%.

The highest prevalences were observed in neurologic patients (10.5 %) and lepers (13.8 %).

The seroprevalence increases with age from 0.6 % to 14.3 % in the general population.

Conclusion : This study shows that HTLV-1 is widely spread in Ivory Coast. The evaluation of the risk of coexposures to HTLV-1, HIV-1 and HIV-2 is under study.

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