

CLINICAL FEATURES AND RISK FACTORS FOR HIV ENCEPHALOPATHY IN CHILDREN

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Abstract. A prospective cohort study was conducted to determine the incidence of progressive encephalopathy (PE) and its associated clinical manifestations amongst a cohort of HIV infected children attending the HIV/AIDS clinic of the Pediatric Institute, Kuala Lumpur Hospital, Malaysia. Neurological and neurobehavioral assessments were performed in 55 children with HIV over a 24-month study period. Parameters assessed were physical and neurological assessments, CD4 counts, CD4 percentages, RNA viral loads and an IQ assessment at four monthly intervals. PE was diagnosed when patient developed at least one of the definitive criteria for PE based on the Consensus of Pediatric Neurology / Psychology Working Group, AIDS Clinical Trial 1996. The incidence of encephalopathy was 18.2% ($n=10$) in 2002. All the patients had hepatosplenomegaly, lymphadenopathy, abnormal deep tendon reflexes and five had impairment in brain growth. The CD4 counts and CD4 percentages were more likely to be associated with PE compared to the non-PE group.

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