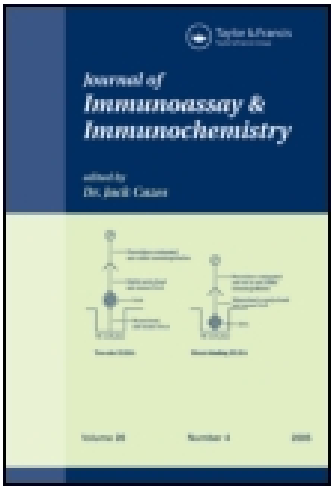

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Efficacy of Generic Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy in HIV-1 Infected Individuals in Nigeria

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EFFICACY OF GENERIC HIGHLY ACTIVE ANTIRETROVIRAL THERAPY IN HIV-1 INFECTED INDIVIDUALS IN NIGERIA

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□ *CD4 T lymphocyte and plasma HIV RNA parameters have been used to monitor disease progression, and predict clinical course in HIV infection. Initial evaluation of these parameters was conducted in the western countries where accessible ARVs, circulating HIV subtypes and mode of transmission are different from the situation in Nigeria. This study appraised these parameters, and efficacy of generic ARVs. Consenting 106 HIV infected ARV naïve patients were enrolled. CD4 T lymphocyte and plasma HIV RNA levels were determined at interval for 24 months. Ninety eight (92.5%) of the patients who completed the follow up in strict adherence to therapy guideline were included in the analysis. Baseline median CD4 T lymphocyte increased from 114 (Range: 6–330) to highest 357 (Range: 15–1036) cells/μL at 18 months of therapy, while baseline median plasma viral RNA declined from 4.6 (Range: 2.6–6.0) Log_{10} copies/mL to undetectable level within three months of therapy. Significant CD4 T-cell restoration and plasma viral RNA decline in the study population demonstrate efficacy of the generic HAART. The importance of combined use of both parameters for evaluation of immunologic and virologic responses to ART was confirmed.*

Keywords ART, CD4 T lymphocyte cell, HAART, Nigeria, plasma viral RNA

INTRODUCTION

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infects and replicates in CD4 bearing cells including the T lymphocytes thus impairing the immune system. Consequently, CD4 T lymphocyte count is the most commonly used marker for monitoring immune status of infected persons. It is also used for staging the disease, and provision of other essential information for clinical management and monitoring of such individuals.[1–3] Monitoring of HIV infection was further enhanced with the development of sensitive PCR-based technology to quantify viral RNA levels in the plasma.[4] Plasma HIV RNA early in HIV infection is highly predictive of clinical course of the

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