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Cognitive Impairment and Psychiatric Disorders in Children and Adolescents with Perinatal HIV Infection in Poland - Preliminary Results

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Introduction

Possible pathogenesis of cognitive impairments and psychiatric disorder in perinatally HIV infected children is related to the interaction of neurotoxic effects of infection, HIV exposure in utero and psychosocial factors. Studies on prevalence of cognitive impairment and psychiatric disorders have not been done in Poland so far.

Objectives

The goal of the study was to assess the effects of perinatal HIV infection on the cognitive functions and mental health in children and adolescent in Poland.

Methods

45 vertically HIV-infected children, aged 6 to 18, were examined with the CANTAB. Results were compared to published age and gender-matched norms using z-scores. 41 subjects (a child and/or a caregiver) were interviewed using K-SADS-PL for the presence of psychiatric disorders (current or past) and were asked to complete sociodemographic questionnaire.

Results

The results revealed significant impairment in a few of Cantab measures for infected group of patients. The main deficits in this group were in the tests of executive function: Stocking of Cambridge planning task, attentional set shifting, spatial working memory but also in the test of speed of movement. Out of 41 infected children tested up to day 24 met criteria for at least one current or past psychiatric disorder according to DSM-IV including ADHD, mood and anxiety disorders.

Conclusions:

Further studies are required to recognize the multiple factors underlying cognitive impairments and psychiatric disorders in vertically HIV infected children.

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