

## HIV-2 INFECTION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

M. Brůčková, D. Kopecká, L. Syráček, K. Vojtěchovský, V. Petkov

Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology, Department of Epidemiology  
and Microbiology, 100 42 Prague, Czechoslovakia

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Several cases of HIV-2 infection in Europe have been described recently, most of them in some relation to West Africa (1, 3, 5). In 1987 first two anti HIV-2 positive persons were identified in Prague, ČSSR. Both of them were male African students-one coming from Burkina Fasso, the other one from Mosambique. The HIV-2 antibody was detected in Pasteur Diagnostics commercial HIV-2 ELISA test and in Swedish "in house" ELISA HIV-2 test (2). The ELISA results were confirmed by Pasteur Diagnostics LAV-II and Swedish SBL 6669 Western blot assays. The Karpas HIV-2 immunoperoxidase test (4) kindly provided and performed in Prague laboratory by A. Karpas revealed also HIV-2 specific reaction in both serum specimens. Some cross reaction was observed in several ELISA HIV-1 commercial tests (DuPont, Electronucleonics, Organon) including weak reaction in Pasteur LAV-1 ELISA. Neither of these specimens reacted in Wellcome HIV-1 test which gave a negative proof for HIV-2 specific findings. Japanese HIV antibody test (Fujirebio) showed strongly positive results in both tested sera. It seems that many tests based on the use of whole virion HIV-1 antigen, detect in higher or lesser extent also HIV-2 antibody. This is not true for the Wellcome competitive test which is strictly HIV-1 specific. Some cross reactions were also noted in HIV-1 Western blots (Biorad, DuPont, Pasteur Diagnostics) especially in the *gag* protein region. This makes the diagnosis of HIV-2 infection even more difficult. The proper evaluation of laboratory results requires much experience. Apparently, we succeeded to prove the presence of HIV-2 antibodies in both African males studying in Prague. However, no HIV-2 antibody positive results were obtained so far in screening tests performed in several hundreds of sera from Czechoslovak population. Despite of this fact the potential risk of acquiring HIV-2 infection must be taken into account.

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