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A PILOT STUDY OF CAROTID INTIMA MEDIA THICKNESS IN HIV-INFECTED WOMEN TREATED WITH PROTEASE INHIBITORS.

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BACKGROUND: The long term effects of antiretroviral therapy-induced metabolic changes remains uncertain. A precise and reproducible measure of carotid intima media thickness (IMT), a non-invasive ultrasound (UTZ) technique, has correlated with coronary atherosclerosis.

METHODS: 15 HIV infected women were matched by age and ethnicity to 15 HIV seronegative (neg) women. Subjects were excluded if they smoked, had DM or HTN. All of the women were < 35 years of age and premenopausal.

RESULTS: The mean CD4 cell count was 436 ± 50 and the median vRNA was <50 c/mL. The mean duration of PI use was 11 ± 6 months. The mean weight for the HIV+ women was 164 ± 14 lbs compared to 147 ± 7 lbs for HIV-neg women. Mean fasting TG in the HIV+ 239 ± 352 mg/dl and the HIV-neg were 92 ± 54 ; Chol in the HIV+ were 224 ± 161 mg/dl and the HIV-neg were 165 ± 19 ; HDL levels were 42 ± 9 mg/dl in the HIV+ and 56 ± 12 in the HIV-neg; LDL were 117 ± 36 mg/dl in the HIV+ and 93 ± 14 in the HIV-neg. Among the 11 pairs with completed IMT UTZ, the HIV+ were 0.586 ± 0.065 mm and for the HIV-neg 0.579 ± 0.052 . IMT were greater among the HIV+ compared to the control in 4 pairs, the same in 3 and less thick in 4 pairs.

CONCLUSION: In this small matched case control study, despite the higher rates of abnormal lipids, no differences were observed in IMT values ($p=ns$). While limited by the small sample size, there was no evidence of accelerated atherosclerosis among women on PI for a mean of 12 months. Larger studies with longer term follow-up are needed.

Keywords: AEGIS, Tunica Media, Tunica Intima, HIV, Arteriosclerosis, Protease Inhibitors, Lipoproteins, LDL, HIV-1, HIV Infections, Lipids, Case-Control Studies, Human, Female, AIDS

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