



## Knowledge of Parents Regarding HIV/AIDS and Health Status of Children Receiving ART in Selected Hospital

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### Introduction and need of the study:

AIDS is an acquired disorder which affects the immune system of the person. As the disease progresses, it gives a way to other infections called as opportunistic infections.

It has been seen, that the incidence of parent to Child transmission is on the rise. The child who has been affected with AIDS is more at risk for developing opportunistic infections. To improve the quality of life, it is essential that a person has regular treatment, follow up, and in addition requires to have a healthy lifestyle to maintain a good health status. The Health status is an important factor which has a bearing on the incidence of infections, quality of life and the mortality related to AIDS.

Childs health status depends on various factors, the main one being awareness of the caregivers regarding HIV / AIDS.

Thus, the investigator felt that if we identify the knowledge that the parents have and assess the health status of children, the data will be useful in identifying the areas in which parents lack knowledge, to help in bridging the gap. We would also be able to identify the current health status of children who are on ART which would enable us to plan strategies to improve the wellbeing.

**Title:** A study to assess the knowledge of parents regarding HIV/AIDS and to evaluate the health status of children receiving ART in ART center of K.E.M. Hospital Mumbai.

### Objectives

- To find out the knowledge of parents regarding HIV/AIDS.
- To assess the selected physiological parameters of children on ART.
- To assess the nutritional status of children on ART.

- To assess the developmental milestones of children receiving ART.
- To compare the health status of children receiving ART with the Knowledge score of parents.

### Research Methodology

**Research Approach:** Exploratory Descriptive approach

**Research Design:** Survey

**Setting of the Study:** Selected ART Center, K.E.M. Hospital, Mumbai.

**Population:** Children living with HIV/AIDS and their Parents.

**Sample:** Children living with HIV/AIDS and their Parents attending ART Center at K.E.M Hospital.

**Sample Size:** 100

### Criteria for sample selection

- Children living with HIV/AIDS and their Parents.
- Parents who can understand English, Hindi, Marathi
- Children and their Parents willing to participate in the study.
- Children whose age is above 1 year.

### Tool and Technique

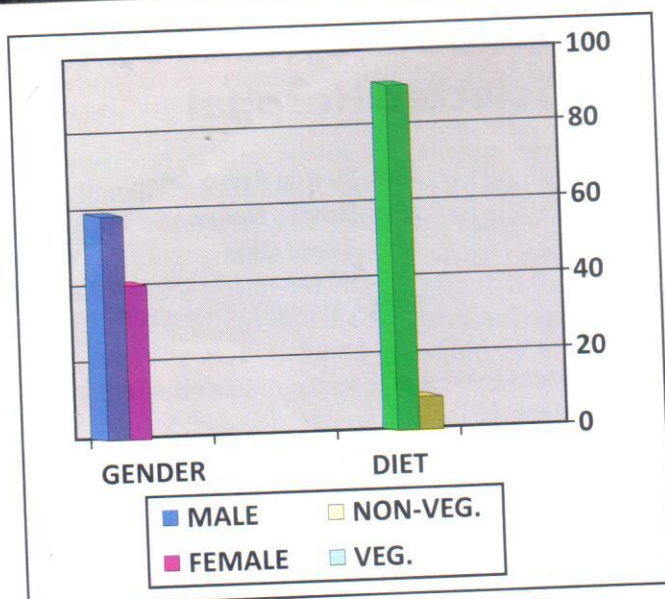
**Tool:** Semi structured Interview schedule to collect information from parents and Anthropometric measurement to assess health status of children.

**Technique:** Interviewing and Assessing of Anthropometric measurements of the children.

### Analysis of the Data

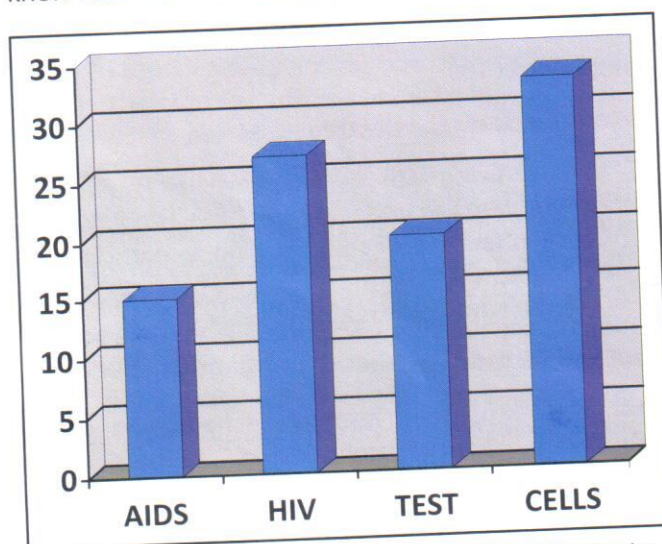
**Demographic Data:** Among the samples selected, 59% of them were Males, where as 41% were Females. 91% of the children were non-vegetarian and only 9% of them were vegetarian.





Distribution of the sample according to gender and their diet pattern.

**Data Related to Knowledge:** Only 15% of the parents knew the actual meaning (i.e. Full form) of AIDS. 27% knew what HIV meant. Only 20% of the sample knew the test which is done for HIV infection. 33% of the samples knew the cells which are responsible to fight infection.

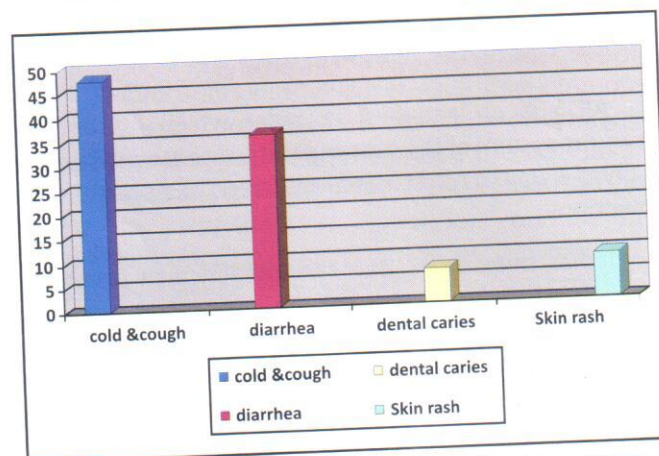


Knowledge of sample regarding Meaning of AIDS, HIV, TEST done and cells involved.

**Data Related to knowledge of parents regarding management of Infection:** 96% of the sample knew that children have special needs when infected with HIV than that of adults. 55% of the sample felt that HIV can be confirmed even when the child is on breastfeed. Regarding improvement of Immune status, 75% felt that

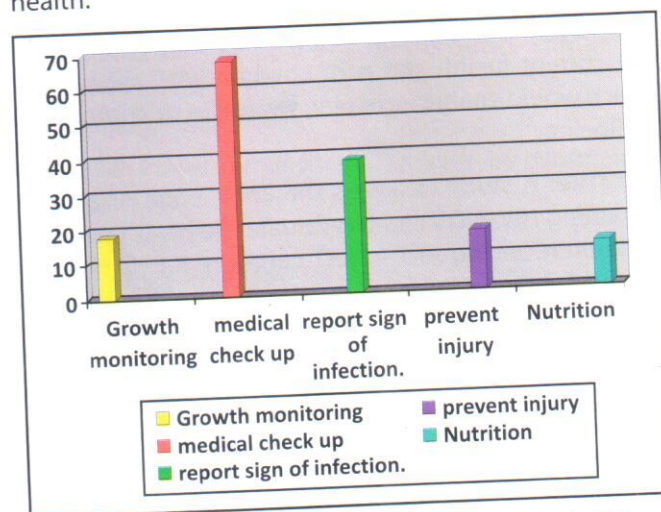
it can be improved by regular medication, good care (31%), adequate infections (31%), Supplementary feeds (18%).

**Data Related to Common Health Problems of Infants and Young Children:** Out of the samples selected, the Common health problems reported were cold and cough (48%), diarrhea (36%), dental caries (7%), skin rash (9%).



Distribution of samples according to reported health problems

**Data Related to Knowledge Regarding care to be taken by Caregivers to Improve Health of HIV Infected Children:** Only 18% felt that growth monitoring was essential. 68% felt that it is important to do regular medical check- ups. 38% felt that it is necessary to recognize and report any signs of infection. Only 17% felt it important to prevent injuries. Only 13% felt it important to consider nutrition as a measure to improve health.



Knowledge of caregivers regarding care of HIV Infected children



## Data Related to Opinion of parents regarding Transmission of HIV

91% of the sample felt that teenagers need not worry about getting AIDS. 41% of the sample knew that they could protect themselves and reduce the spread of infection if they were aware about the HIV infection. 56% among the sample felt that it is a rumor that those infected with HIV should not be provided any support and funds.

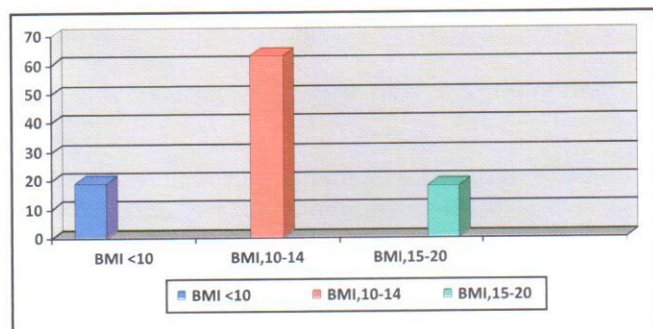
When questioned regarding the mode of transmission, only 23% of the samples were aware of the mode of transmission of HIV.

When asked if the children were aware what they were suffering from? It was noted that 98% of the samples infected were unaware that they were suffering from HIV infection neither were they told by their parents.

## Assessment of Nutritional status of the samples

It was seen that all the samples who attended OPD were undernourished and this finding correlated with the knowledge aspect where only 31% of the parents felt that adequate nutrition can improve health of the child.

BMI less than 10 was note in 19.10% of the children, BMI between 10-14 was seen in 62.92% and BMI ranging from 15-20 was found in only 17.98% of the children.



Nutritional status of the samples according to the BMI calculation.

**Data Related to developmental milestones of children receiving ART:** None of the parents of children with HIV/AIDS reported observing any delay in the milestones of their children.

## Comparison of the health status of children receiving ART with the Knowledge score of parents

Co-efficient of correlation was calculated[

$=8.22 \times 10^{-5}$ ]. There was poor correlation between the knowledge score of parents and BMI of their children which indicated that knowledge of parents has not influenced the nutritional status of their children. Since the knowledge score of the parents was already poor this may be the reason why the nutritional status of children was seen to be poor indicating malnutrition.

## Conclusion

Children with HIV/AIDS form a vulnerable group which further is affected by poor nutrition, which pushes the child towards malnutrition and opens the door for the opportunistic infection increasing the mortality and morbidity rate. Knowledge of parents plays a very important role in sustaining the health of the child and in improving the quality of life. The knowledge and the health status may be influenced by many other factors but mainly economy as most parent themselves being infected do not have job or adequate source of income to meet the nutritional requirements.

The study highlighted that though the health team believes in providing adequate amount of information and teaching via the media. Knowledge has not improved in the parents and effect of poor knowledge has been reflected in the poor health status of the children in the study. Hence it may be concluded that health team needs to keep on reinforcing importance of good nutrition, in maintaining health of children specially those diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. The Government should consider providing nutritional supplements which would enhance the nutritional status of the children and make the treatment modality effective.

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