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Attention and concentration functions in HIV-positive adolescents who are on anti-retroviral treatment.

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1. Abstract

Approximately 11.5 million Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)-positive individuals were living in South Africa in 2007, many of whom were infected via mother-to-child transmission. The current study aimed to compare the attentional and concentration functioning of 30 seropositive adolescents on managed anti-retroviral (ARV) programmes, with a comparable group of 71 seronegative adolescents. The results showed that the uncorrected errors on trial 1; self-corrected errors on trial 2; time taken, uncorrected and self-corrected errors on trial 3 of the Stroop Colour-Word Interference Test; and the errors on the Trail Making Test Part B were significantly poorer in the seropositive sample. The results also indicated that the clinical variations in the HIV-positive sample, including the age at which ARVs were commenced; duration of ARV treatment; World Health Organisation (WHO) stage at diagnosis; starting and current $CD4^{+}$ counts; and starting viral load, but with the exception of the current viral load, impacted significantly on test performance.