

**A META-ANALYSIS OF ARTESUNATE PLUS SULFADOXINE-
PYRIMETHAMINE VERSUS SULFADOXINE-PYRIMETHAMINE ALONE
FOR TREATMENT OF UNCOMPLICATED MALARIA IN CHILDREN.**

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A Research Report, submitted to the School of Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science (Medicine) in Epidemiology and Biostatistics.

Johannesburg, September 2004

DECLARATION

I, Benido Impouma, declare that this research report is my own work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Science (Medicine) in Epidemiology and Biostatistics in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. To the best of my knowledge, it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at this or any other University.

 [Signature of candidate]

.....30day ofSeptember, 2004

DEDICATION

This report is dedicated to my parents Jean Impouma and Therese Impouma for all the time and resources they put to make me what I am today.

ABSTRACT

Study objectives

The objective of this meta-analysis was to review the comparative efficacy and tolerance of sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine (SP) given alone or in combination with one (SPAS1) or three (SPAS3) doses of artesunate in children with uncomplicated *P. falciparum* malaria, aged 6 months to 10 years. Specifically, it assessed cure rate, fever and parasite clearance time, gametocyte carriage and tolerability.

Methods

The methodology used was a systematic review and a meta-analysis of four randomised controlled trials. The primary endpoint was the parasitological cure rate at day 28. Secondary endpoint included the parasitological cure rate at day 14, time to fever and parasite clearance, gametocyte carriage and occurrence of adverse events.

Results

Cure rate at day 28 corrected by PCR was 2.5 times higher in the combination of SPAS3 than in SP alone (pooled OR=2.55, 95% CI 1.93 to 3.37). There was no difference in cure rate at day 28 corrected by PCR between the combination of SPAS1 and SP alone (pooled OR=1.06 95% CI 0.98 to 1.15). Fever and parasite clearance times were significantly faster in both SPAS1 and SPAS3 compared to SP alone ($p<0.001$). By day 28 all children on the combination therapy were agametocytaemic as opposed to those on SP alone ($p<0.001$). All drug regimens were well tolerated and safe.

Conclusion

The combination of SPAS3 is more efficacious than SP alone in treatment of children with uncomplicated *P. falciparum* malaria. The combination is recommended for adoption as a replacement for SP alone in areas where malaria is endemic.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis was written on the basis of the knowledge and experience that I have acquired during the one year training at the School of Public Health, University of the Witwatersrand.

Special thanks to my supervisors, Drs Ronel Kellermann and Gill Schierhout, who guided me through the protocol development and report writing. They were available each time I needed them to review my drafts.

I also wish to acknowledge the following agencies: UNDP / WORLD BANK / WHO Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) for providing the funding for my training at Wits School of Public Health, The National Laboratory of Public Health for supporting me with additional resources.

I would like to acknowledge the following persons: Pr Henri Joseph Parra, Dr Jean Vivien Mombouli, Dr Blaise Bikandou, Pr. Brian Greenwood, Pr. Jimmy Withworth Pr. Jimmy Volmink, Pr. Paul Garner, Pr. Arnaud Fontanet, Dr Bob Taylor, Sir Steve Wayling, Sir George Indyke, Dr Joel Breman and Pr. Jonathon Levin.

I would like to thank Ms Bouckoulou Chandra-my fiancée, for her moral support during the one-year of training. I also wish to thank my colleagues for their support and encouragement during the entire study period at the University of the Witwatersrand.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AS	Artesunate
CI	Confidence Interval
CQ	Chloroquine
OR	Odds Ratio
PCR	Polymerase Chain Reaction
RCT	Randomized Controlled Trials
SMD	Standard Mean Difference
SP	Sulfadoxine-Pyrimethamine
SPAS	Sulfadoxine-Pyrimethamine combined with Artesunate
SPAS1	Sulfadoxine-Pyrimethamine and one dose of Artesunate
SPAS3	Sulfadoxine-Pyrimethamine and 3 doses of Artesunate
WHO	World Health Organization