

Abstract:

The treatment of leishmaniasis, as currently conducted in Kenya with sodium stibogluconate, is unsatisfactory as it is expensive, resistance and relapses may occur, and major adverse effects have been reported. Recently, aminosidine (paromomycin) sulphate has shown good antileishmanial activity on its own as well as synergism with pentavalent antimony, administered concurrently. The present study was designed to assess the effectiveness of parenteral aminosidine, alone or combined with sodium stibogluconate, in visceral leishmaniasis, compared to treatment by stibogluconate alone. 53 patients were allocated to the 3 therapeutic regimes. The presenting signs and symptoms of leishmaniasis were those commonly seen in the visceral form of the disease, particularly in Kenya. At termination, clinical cures were achieved in all 53 patients with no difference between treatment groups. Spleen aspirates revealed the best parasitological results in patients receiving the combined treatment, with only 13% failures (partial cures + relapses), as opposed to 21% failures with aminosidine alone and 45% with stibogluconate alone. Treatment with aminosidine alone was the cheapest and safest regime.