

## Abstract

**OBJECTIVES:** A human papillomavirus (HPV) prevalence survey was done in Mombasa, Kenya, to improve the knowledge of HPV prevalence and genotype distribution in sub-Saharan African countries overall, and in women of different ages. **METHODS:** HPV prevalence was assessed using PCR in women older than 15 years attending family planning and mother-child care services. **RESULTS:** Among 496 women, HPV prevalence was high (42.3%; 95% CI: 37.9-46.8; world age-standardized). Moreover, 46% of HPV-positive women harbored multiple-type infections. The most common types were HPV58 (10.5% of women), HPV16 (7.7%), HPV53 (6.7%), HPV18 (4.6%), and HPV6 (4.4%), and the prevalence of any high-risk HPV type was 28.8%. HPV prevalence was elevated among all age-groups (range 36.4-45.7%). Independent associations with HPV positivity were found for being in a polygamous marriage (OR = 1.7) and lifetime number of sexual partners (OR for 3 vs. 1 = 1.5), although they were of only borderline statistical significance. **CONCLUSIONS:** These findings differ from other world regions, showing a high HPV burden in all age-groups with a high proportion of multiple-type infections. Our data strengthen the urgency of HPV vaccination in Kenya but also highlight the elevated number of women who would have positive results in an HPV-based screening program in the country.