

Role of Dietary Antioxidants in the Management of Human Immunodeficiency Virus

Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) caused by Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is currently the sixth-biggest cause of death world-wide, accounting for 2.9%. There is also increased hidden hunger among the AIDS patients and a high percentage with unsuppressed viral load despite the various interventions put in place to suppress the virus. Dietary antioxidants including Vitamin A, Vitamin C, Vitamin E, Vitamin K, Zinc and selenium have recently received significant attention as therapeutic agents for the treatment of several immune compromised conditions. This is attributed to their ability to scavenging excess Reactive Oxygen Species (ROS) to maintain normal physiological conditions. This study therefore, seek to find out if dietary antioxidants could be used along with ARVs to suppress HIV viral load. Two scientific databases (PubMed, Scopus) were searched between 1st – 28th February, 2021 using Dietary antioxidants, HIV and AIDS as the key words. Articles published in highly refereed and peer reviewed journals were selected. In total 15 articles were retrieved however, 7 Articles were rejected since they did not discuss the dietary antioxidant in relation to treatment of HIV, or statistical analysis used were not suitable, or the article was a review of other publications. The articles reviewed indicated that AIDS patients have a deficiency of micronutrients contributing to hidden hunger and supplementation of the micronutrients contributes to reduced morbidity and mortality among the patients. Studies indicate that Vitamin A, Vitamin E and zinc are important dietary antioxidants in boosting immunity. In conclusion, Dietary antioxidants are a safe and effective way to scale down morbidity and mortality related to AIDs and therefore, they should be given a significant consideration as a potential strategy for suppressing the viral load alongside antiretroviral therapy

Key words

DIETARY, ANTIOXIDANTS, HIV, MANAGEMENT

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