

**References:**

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**Seroepidemiological Surveillance of HIV Infection  
in Southern Taiwan**

To collaborate with the AIDS prevention program of the Department of Health, The Executive Yuan, R.O.C. the Kaohsiung Medical College, beginning in August 1985, has been conducting sero-epidemiological surveillance of the HIV antibodies of the AIDS risk groups in southern Taiwan to understand the prevalence in southern Taiwan, and to follow up antibody positive cases for early detection to prevent the transmission of the disease.

The risk groups included in the study are persons in close contact with high risk sexual behavior, and blood and its products. Methods used for the screening of HIV are ELISA for initial screening, two repeated positive cases will be confirmed by Western blot method. For Western blot confirmed positive cases, blood will be taken for virus identification and isolation, and for cellular immunological test and physical diagnosis, and to follow up the possible source of infection.

Between August 1985 and April 1988, 2,527 cases had been screened, including: 28 homo or bi-sexual cases, 39 cases of hetero with multiple sex partners, 647 STD patients, 67 prostitutes, 198 hemo patients, 52 patients for hemodialysis, 390 IV drug abusers and abstainer, 400 cases with cytomegalovirus antibody titer  $\geq 1:16$ , 25 cases of systemic infections, 2 Kaposi's Sarcoma patients, 24 foreign blood donors, 20 ship crew, and 635 prisoners. Through repeated ELISA and confirmation by Western blot, four were found to be HIV antibody positive (3 hemophilia patients and one homosexual). The first year prevalence was 0.5 per 1,000 (1/1,418), and that for the second year was 3 per 1,000 (3/1,109), an increase of four times. Of them, one homosexual was found to be serologically positive. He had developed AIDS clinical symptoms and was confirmed to be AIDS case by the AIDS Control Committee of the Department of Health, The Executive Yuan, This case was detected early because the physicians were familiar with AIDS<sup>1,2</sup>. Blood samples were sent for testings under the strong denial of homosexuality by the patient. Therefore, in the control of AIDS in Taiwan, in addition to the strict Seroepidemiological surveillance of the risk groups, medical and nursing personnel should be urged to be more alert. The other three HIV antibody positive cases were found to have mild defect of the T<sub>4</sub> cells (T<sub>4</sub>/T<sub>8</sub> < 1), without yet any AIDS or ARC symptoms. They have been followed-up closely.

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