

Background: This study was aimed at determining the prevalence and type of hearing disorders in HIV positive patients and any correlation with the CD4 counts/stage of HIV/AIDS in patients attending the comprehensive care clinic (CCC). Methods: Case control study of 194 HIV positive patients attending CCC recruited into the study after informed consent. A thorough clinical examination and otoscopy done followed by tuning fork tests, Pure Tone Audiometry and tympanometric tests. This was compared with 124 HIV negative subjects matched for age and sex who were recruited from the voluntary counseling and testing centre. The world health organization staging of the HIV/AIDS disease and the CD4 positive lymphocyte cell count were carried out and correlated with any hearing disorder. Results were analyzed using statistical package for social sciences version 10.0. Results: Hearing loss (HL) was present in 33.5% of HIV positive compared to 8.1% in negative subjects. No gender bias in HL but HL worsened with advancement of age. SNHL was the most common and the higher frequencies were the most affected. Low CD4 cell count and advanced HIV disease were associated with increased chance of having a hearing loss. Conclusion: Hearing loss is more prevalent in HIV positive individuals than negative normal subjects and tends to worsen with the advancement of the HIV disease. This may negatively impact on the overall care and standard of living of HIV positive patients, hence otological care should be part of the comprehensive care.