

HIV-2: THE GLOBAL EXPERIENCE OF A PORTUGUESE CENTER SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE EPIDEMIC

AUTHORS

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BACKGROUND

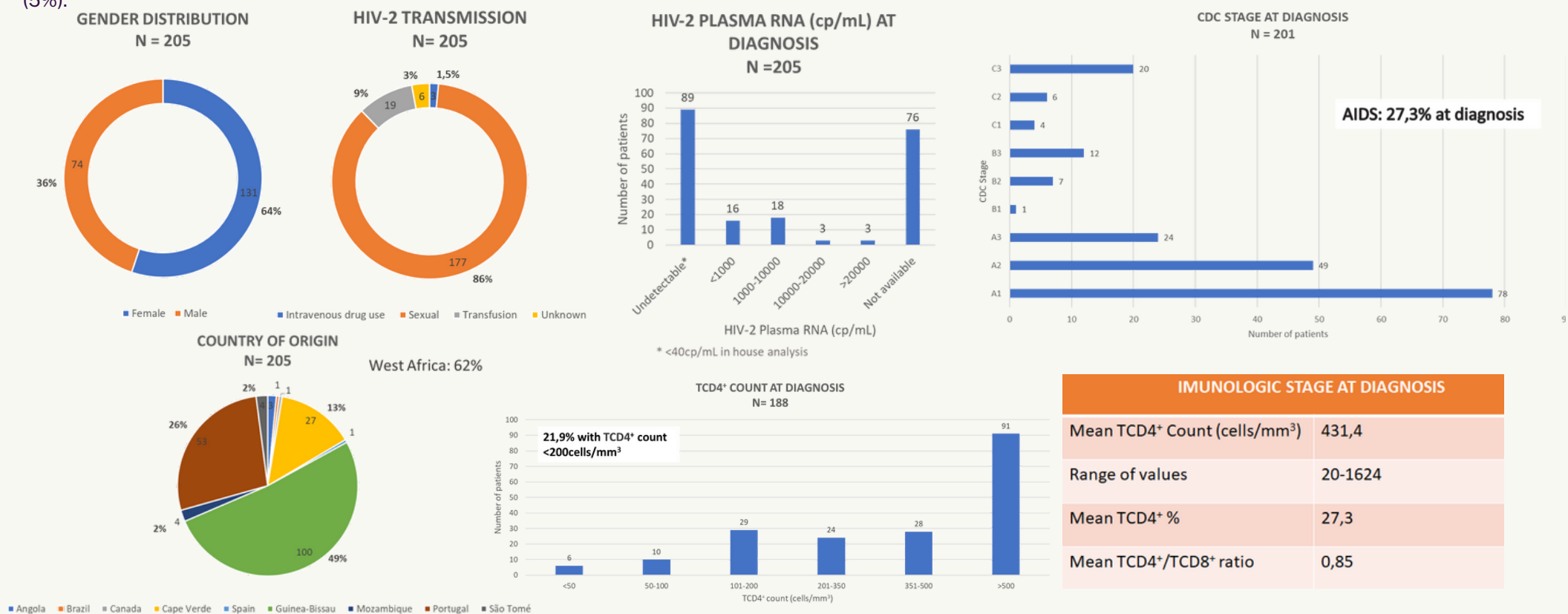
HIV-2 (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is endemic in West Africa, though some cases have been imported and transmission has occurred outside Africa, mainly in Portugal and France in Europe. Compared to HIV-1, the infection behaves with a slower decline in TCD4+ lymphocytes, lower viral replication, and a longer asymptomatic stage, which may challenge the diagnostic suspicion in non-endemic areas. Until 2020, there were 2030 cumulative reported cases (prevalence of 3,3%) in Portugal.

METHODOLOGY

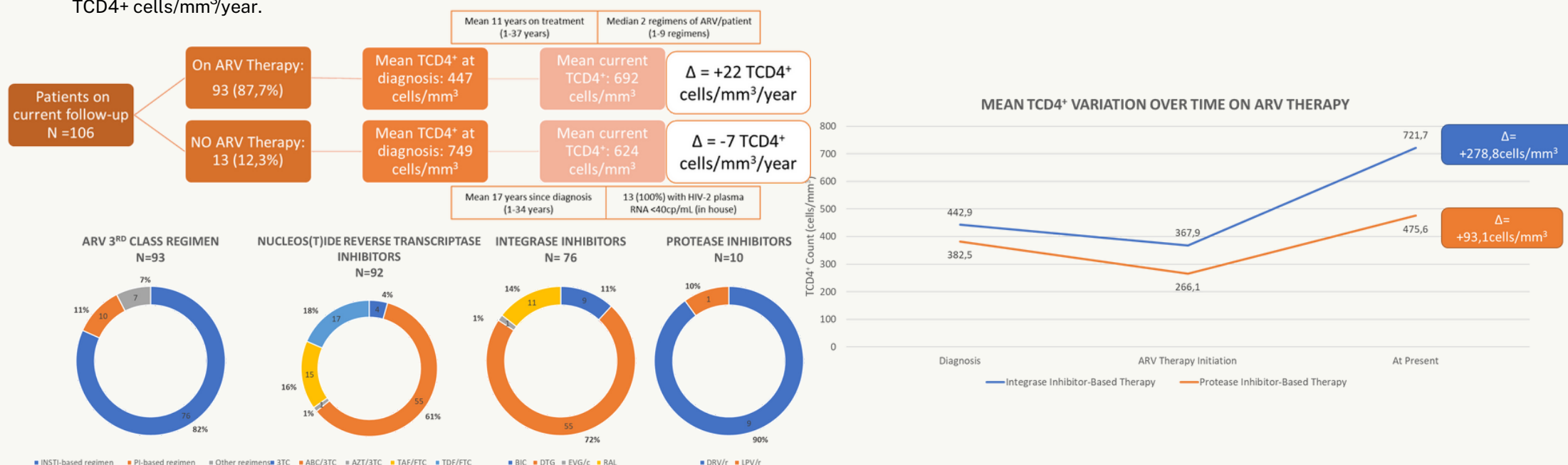
Real-life, retrospective, observational cohort study. Socio-demographic, clinical, laboratory and therapeutic data were collected from the whole cohort of HIV-2 infected patients that have been followed in a Portuguese tertiary hospital - Hospital Egas Moniz, Centro Hospitalar Lisboa Ocidental - since the mid 80's decade.

RESULTS

Total cohort of **205 HIV-2 patients**; Most were remote diagnoses dating back to 1985-2009 (77%), while a minority were detected in 2010-2019 (18%) and 2020-2022 (5%).



Currently, 106 patients (51,7% of the total) are actively followed (29 died, 4 transferred to another centre and 65 lost to follow-up). 88% of patients began antiretroviral therapy (ART): presented a mean TCD4+ 447/mm³, with a mean gap between diagnosis and ART initiation of 6 years. These patients presented a mean increase of 46 TCD4+ cells/mm³/year.



CONCLUSION

From our experience, the incidence of infection has been decreasing over the decades, perhaps due to better follow-up and appropriate treatment in the countries of origin. We observed a large amount of patients lost to follow up (32% of the total cohort). 12% of patients being followed currently are not on ARV therapy, with undetectable viral load and with good immunological status. It is necessary to define markers of inflammatory activity and disease progression adjusted to HIV-2 infection, that allow to define criteria for the beginning of ARV.

RELATED LITERATURE

- GoClib GS et al. 90-90-90 for HIV-2? Ending the HIV-2 epidemic by enhancing care and clinical management of patients infected with HIV-2. The Lancet. 2018;5:e390-99
- Portugal. Ministério da Saúde. Direção-Geral da Saúde/Instituto Nacional de Saúde Doutor Ricardo Jorge. Infecção VIH e SIDA em Portugal - 2020. Lisboa: DGS/INSA; 2020