

Does treating cytomegalovirus and tuberculosis very early (even without being sure if the child has these infections) in addition to the usual treatment for pneumonia save HIV-positive children's movement and reasoning?

Submission date 10/12/2021	Recruitment status No longer recruiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered
		<input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
Registration date 17/01/2022	Overall study status Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan
		<input type="checkbox"/> Results
Last Edited 27/08/2024	Condition category Nervous System Diseases	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection remains a major threat to the lives of many children in Sub-Saharan Africa. Despite the great strides towards the reduction of HIV-associated mortality, and improved survival of children infected with HIV, their quality of life remains a major priority. Infections like HIV and severe pneumonia increase the risk of developing significant motor (movement) and cognitive (reasoning) deficits.

The EMPIRICAL study aims to find out if giving treatment for cytomegalovirus and tuberculosis very early (even without being sure if the child has these infections) in addition to the usual treatment for pneumonia in children with HIV, is better for a child than receiving only the treatment for pneumonia.

This study aims to find out if this treatment could also save children's movement and reasoning. This study will compare movement and reasoning scores of children participating in the EMPIRICAL trial who received the additional treatment to those who did not. The study will also compare the scores of children who received additional treatment to those who have HIV but no pneumonia and to those who have no HIV but have pneumonia.

Who can participate?

Caregivers of children who are either participating in the EMPIRICAL trial (HIV-infected with severe pneumonia), HIV positive children without pneumonia, or HIV negative children with pneumonia, and are aged between 28 and 1 year in Uganda will be asked to participate.

What does the study involve?

A pre-tested questionnaire will be used to collect information from caregivers about their child's birth, circumstances around their child's growth, information about the child's main caretaker,

and family's wellbeing. The study will then measure the child's movement, thinking, and reasoning abilities by interacting with the child. Children participating in the study will be followed up for 2 years, initially at discharge from hospital, at 1 year, and after 2 years.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Caregivers might feel uncomfortable with spending more time in the hospital while their child is being assessed. If their child is found to have any problems with their movement, thinking, or reasoning to levels that need treatment, caregivers will be given an opportunity to decide if they would like to be told these findings. This study will not expose the child to any other risk.

Caregivers will get a chance to know about their child's performance on these tests. If the child is found to have any problems with their movement, thinking, or reasoning to levels that need treatment, caregivers will be advised on the treatment required and referred to specialists in this area. From this study, we may learn more about the thinking/reasoning and movement of HIV-infected children with severe pneumonia. All of these findings may one day help us to better treat other children with HIV and severe pneumonia.

The records of this study will be kept private. The only people with access to the personal information of the caregiver or child will be the employees of the hospital where the child is being looked after. The child's name will not appear in any information published about this study. Personal pseudo-anonymized information will be accessed by the study team members, and the Ethics Committees but always without the name of the child. Any study data that is to be transmitted via the Internet will be encrypted with secure passwords known to the sender and recipient(s) only. The child's confidentiality will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. Participants in the study have the right to access, rectify or erase their personal data; restrict the types of activities the research team can do with their personal data; object to using their personal data for specific types of activities, or withdraw their consent.

Where is the study run from?

Makerere University (Uganda)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

From December 2020 to April 2025

Who is funding the study?

European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP)

Who is the main contact?

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Contact information

Type(s)

Public

Contact name

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Additional identifiers**EudraCT/CTIS number**

Nil known

IRAS number**ClinicalTrials.gov number**

Nil known

Secondary identifying numbers

TMA2020CDF-3198

Study information**Scientific Title**

Neurocognitive function among HIV-infected infants with severe pneumonia receiving empirical treatment for cytomegalovirus and tuberculosis

Acronym

Neuro-Empirical

Study objectives

Because empirical treatment for CMV and TB among HIV positive children with severe pneumonia would reduce duration of hospitalization and risk of complications, it is expected to produce better neurocognitive outcomes at 2 years of follow up compared to those receiving standard of care alone.

Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)

Approved 05/05/2021, School of Medicine Research Ethics Committee (P.O. Box 7072 Kampala, Uganda; +256 414 533541; rresearch@gmail.com), ref: 2019-115

Study design

Prospective longitudinal observational study of a cohort nested under the EMPIRICAL study (a randomized open-label clinical trial) in comparison to two separate longitudinal cohorts

Primary study design

Observational

Secondary study design

Nested case-control study

Study setting(s)

Hospital

Study type(s)

Treatment

Participant information sheet

Not available in web format, please use contact details to request a participant information sheet

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Neurocognitive function among HIV-infected children hospitalized with severe pneumonia

Interventions

This study is a prospective longitudinal observational study nested under the EMPIRICAL study (a randomized open-label clinical trial) compared to a longitudinal cohort of HIV-negative children with severe pneumonia, as well as a cross-sectional cohort of HIV-positive children without pneumonia.

Eligible participants will be identified and approached during hospitalization. Eligible participants who give informed consent will be consecutively enrolled in the study. A pre-tested questionnaire will be used to collect participants' baseline data including age, sex, a detailed anthropometric assessment (weight, length, weight for length z score and head circumference), duration on ART for those who will have already started ART, ART exposure in utero, treatment adherence using 3-day recall, history of prematurity, prior hospitalization and laboratory findings including hemoglobin, CMV viral load, HIV viral load, and CD4 cell count. Other independent variables will include birth history (birth weight and history of requiring resuscitation), caretaker data (relationship with the child, level of education, depression score), and family socioeconomic status.

At 1-year post-randomization and 2 years of age, a follow-up questionnaire will be applied evaluating caretaker data, socioeconomic status, and anthropometric measurements. Neurodevelopmental assessments will be done at baseline (at discharge from hospital since they will be stable enough to do the neurocognitive tests), at 1 year post-randomization to receive the assigned intervention (empirical treatment for CMV, TB, or both i.e. cases) or no intervention (controls) to establish the trend of neurocognitive function, and at 2 years of age.

Intervention Type

Other

Primary outcome measure

Development measured in participants the intervention group (empirical treatment for CMV, TB, or both) and SoC alone using mean scaled scores on the Bayley scale of infant development at discharge, 1 year post-randomization, and at 2 years of age

Secondary outcome measures

1. Development measured in participants the intervention group (empirical treatment for CMV, TB, or both), SoC alone, and a matched cohort of HIV-positive infants without pneumonia using

mean scaled scores on the Bayley scale of infant development at discharge, 1-year post-randomization, and at 2 years of age

2. Development measured in participants the intervention group (empirical treatment for CMV, TB, or both), SoC alone, and a cohort of HIV negative infants with severe pneumonia using mean scaled scores on the Bayley scale of infant development at discharge, 1 year post-randomization, and at 2 years of age

Overall study start date

20/12/2020

Completion date

30/04/2025

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

Cohort of HIV positive children with severe pneumonia:

1. Aged between 28 and 365 days
2. Participating in the EMPIRICAL trial
3. Current hospitalization due to pneumonia with criteria for parenteral antibiotics (≥ 1 World Health Organization criteria)
4. Pneumonia, defined as chest indrawing or fast breathing for age (for infants aged 28 to 60 days, ≥ 60 breaths per minute; for infants aged 61 to 365 days, ≥ 50 breaths per minute)
5. HIV-confirmed infection (with at least one molecular method: DNA PCR or RNA PCR/viral load)
6. Informed consent obtained from caregivers

Cohort of HIV negative children with severe pneumonia:

1. Aged between 28 and 365 days
2. Current hospitalization due to pneumonia with criteria for parenteral antibiotics (≥ 1 World Health Organization criteria)
3. Pneumonia, defined as chest indrawing or fast breathing for age (for infants aged 28 to 60 days, ≥ 60 breaths per minute; for infants aged 61 to 365 days, ≥ 50 breaths per minute)
4. Informed consent obtained from caregivers

Cohort of HIV positive children without pneumonia:

1. Aged between 28 and 365 days
2. HIV-confirmed infection (with at least one molecular method: DNA PCR or RNA PCR/viral load)
3. Informed consent obtained from caregivers

Participant type(s)

Patient

Age group

Child

Lower age limit

28 Days

Upper age limit

365 Days

Sex

Both

Target number of participants

85

Total final enrolment

105

Key exclusion criteria

1. Clinical TB (pulmonary or extrapulmonary) diagnosis. Defined as the necessity of TB treatment prescribed by a physician, known bacteriologically confirmed TB case (at least one biological specimen positive by culture or Xpert MTB/RIF) at the moment of randomization, previously treated for TB or currently on treatment for TB, or documented evidence of close TB exposure.
2. Pure wheezers. Defined as a clear clinical improvement after a bronchodilator test.
3. Active malignancies, systemic immunosuppressive medications, or evidence of condition other than HIV and pneumonia
4. Weighing <2.5 kg
5. Hemoglobin less than <6 g/dl in the screening blood test or in a test done in the last 48 h
6. Neutropenia <500 /mm³ in the screening blood test or in a test done in the last 48 h

Date of first enrolment

05/05/2021

Date of final enrolment

08/09/2023

Locations**Countries of recruitment**

Uganda

Study participating centre

Makerere University

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Kampala

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Sponsor information**Organisation**

Makerere University

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Sponsor type

Research organisation

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ROR

<https://ror.org/03dmz0111>

Funder(s)

Funder type

Government

Funder Name

European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership

Alternative Name(s)

Le partenariat Europe-Pays en développement pour les essais cliniques, A Parceria entre a Europa e os Países em Desenvolvimento para a Realização de Ensaaios Clínicos, The European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership, European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials, EDCTP

Funding Body Type

Private sector organisation

Funding Body Subtype

International organizations

Location

Netherlands

Results and Publications

Publication and dissemination plan

Planned publication in a high-impact peer-reviewed journal

Intention to publish date

30/05/2026

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are available on request. Anyone interested in accessing the de-identified patient datasets can reach out on the contact email address provided and the study contact will respond to the request accordingly

IPD sharing plan summary

Available on request