

Poster presentation

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## Presence of HTLV-IIb among HIV-1 positive IDUs in Argentina

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### Background

HTLV-IIb is endemic among aborigines in the northeast region of Argentina. HTLV-II is also present in IDUs and, in Argentina, only one case has been previously characterized as subtype IIa.

### Materials and methods

A nested-PCR for LTR of HTLV-II was performed in 11 IDUs HTLV-II seropositive from Buenos Aires city from 2000 to 2001. Neighbor-joining and Parsimony trees were carried out using Phylip package program.

### Results

Ten of the samples clustered with the HTLV. IIb subgroup while 1 of the samples grouped with the IIa subgroup closer to Brazilian aborigine isolates (Kay139, Kay73 and BRAZ.A21). All individuals were also co-infected with HIV-1.

### Conclusion

These results correlate with previous studies conducted among IDUs from New York city, Vietnam and Southern Europe where HTLV-IIb was more frequently found. In contrast, IIa is found among IDUs from other regions of the USA, Europe and Brazil. This is the first time in which subtype b is described in Argentina among IDUs. Its presence may be due to migrations of aborigines to big cities and the introduction of drugs in this population. Lately, there was also a high rate of migration and tourism to Argentina, especially from southern Europe and USA, possibly contributing to the spread of HTLV-IIb in our coun-

try. Interestingly, the IIa sample described here was found to be related with Brazilian aborigine sequences in contrast to the previous Argentinian IDU which was closer to African isolates.