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Human papillomavirus genotypes in cervical cancers in Mozambique

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The distribution of human papillomavirus (HPV) types in cervical cancers is essential for design and evaluation of HPV type-specific vaccines. To follow up on a previous report that HPV types 35 and 58 were the dominant HPV types in cervical neoplasia in Mozambique, the HPV types in a consecutive case series of 74 invasive cervical cancers in Mozambique were determined.

The most common worldwide major oncogenic HPV types 16 and 18 were present in 69% of cervical cancers, suggesting that a vaccine targeting HPV-16 and -18 would have a substantial impact on cervical cancer also in Mozambique.
were HIV-positive, but multiple HPV infections were not more common among HIV-positive women (age-adjusted odds ratio, 1·0; 95 % CI, 0·25–4·0). Almost all patients had advanced stage tumours that may have resulted in immunosuppression.

Our findings that HPV-16 and -18 are the most frequent HPV infections associated with cervical cancer in Mozambique is in concordance with the overall world distribution of HPV types in cervical cancer (Clifford et al., 2003), but is not in line with a study by Castellsague et al. (2001) who investigated 239 healthy women and 23 women with cervical dysplasia in Mozambique, and found HPV-35 and 58 to be the most common HPV types. We investigated the HPV type distribution in invasive cervical cancer. Different HPV types are associated with different cancer risks (Clifford et al., 2003), and circulation of HPV types among women without cancer may therefore not accurately reflect which HPV types cause invasive cervical cancer in a population. Furthermore, in many countries it is difficult to obtain representative population-based samples from healthy women or women with asymptomatic lesions. Recruitment of asymptomatic women with cancer at the major site offering health care in the country may therefore have resulted in a more representative sample of oncogenic HPV types. However, it should be noted that HPV-35 was not uncommon in our series, being found in 19 % of patients.

Continued investigation and monitoring of which HPV types that actually cause cervical cancer in different countries is undoubtedly an important endeavour. Our study suggests that HPV vaccines targeting HPV-16 and -18, the two worldwide most frequent oncogenic HPV types, would have a substantial impact on cervical cancer also in Mozambique.

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**References**


