



**HAL**  
open science

## Timing of initiation of antiretroviral therapy in AIDS-free HIV-1-infected patients: a collaborative analysis of 18 HIV cohort studies.

Jonathan A. C. Sterne, Margaret May, Dominique Costagliola, Frank de Wolf,  
Andrew N. Phillips, Ross Harris, Michele Jönsson Funk, Ronald Geskus, John  
Gill, François Dabis, et al.

### ► To cite this version:

Jonathan A. C. Sterne, Margaret May, Dominique Costagliola, Frank de Wolf, Andrew N. Phillips, et al.. Timing of initiation of antiretroviral therapy in AIDS-free HIV-1-infected patients: a collaborative analysis of 18 HIV cohort studies.. The Lancet, 2009, 373 (9672), pp.1352-63. 10.1016/S0140-6736(09)60612-7 . inserm-00368642

**HAL Id: inserm-00368642**

**<https://inserm.hal.science/inserm-00368642>**

Submitted on 4 May 2009

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

**When should AIDS-free HIV-1 infected persons initiate antiretroviral therapy? Collaborative analysis of HIV cohort studies**

When To Start Consortium\*

- \* Complete lists including writing committee, steering committee, contributing cohorts and individuals contributing to cohorts follow the main text

Correspondence to: Professor Jonathan Sterne

Department of Social Medicine, University of Bristol

Canynge Hall, Whatley Road

Bristol BS8 2PS, UK

Tel: +44 117 928 7396

Fax: +44 117 928 7325

E-mail: [jonathan.sterne@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:jonathan.sterne@bristol.ac.uk)

## Abstract

**Background:** The CD4 count at which combination antiretroviral therapy (cART) should be initiated is a central, unresolved issue in the care of HIV-1 infected patients. In the absence of randomized trials, we examined this question in prospective cohort studies.

**Methods:** Antiretroviral-naïve patients from 15 cohort studies, who started cART after 1997 with CD4 <550 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, AIDS-free and without a history of injection drug use, were eligible. We estimated distributions of lead times (from the first CD4 count measurement in an upper range to the upper threshold of a lower range) and unseen AIDS and death events (occurring before reaching the upper threshold of a lower CD4 count range) in the absence of treatment using data on patients followed during the pre-cART era, and used these to impute completed datasets including lead times and unseen events. We compared the effect of deferred with immediate initiation of cART on rates of AIDS and death, and death, in adjacent CD4 ranges of width 100 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>.

**Findings:** Deferring cART until CD4 count range 251-350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> was associated with higher rates of AIDS and death, compared with starting in the range 351-450 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> (hazard ratio 1.28; 95% CI: 1.04, 1.57). The adverse effect of deferring cART increased with decreasing CD4 threshold. Deferring cART was associated with higher mortality rates, although effects on mortality were less marked than effects on AIDS and death.

**Interpretation:** These findings should help guide physicians and patients in deciding when to initiate antiretroviral treatment. Our results support the minimum threshold for initiation of antiretroviral therapy being 350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>.

## Introduction

Combination antiretroviral therapy (cART) has dramatically reduced morbidity and mortality in HIV-1 infected individuals since its introduction in 1996.<sup>1,2</sup> Short-term randomized controlled trials (RCTs) conducted in immunodeficient patients demonstrated that rates of AIDS or death were halved after approximately one year of cART, compared with rates in patients treated with drugs from only one antiretroviral therapy class.<sup>3</sup> There has been no long-term trial examining the clinical effect of cART, but observational data indicate that cART reduces rates of AIDS or death over several years, both in immunodeficient patients and those with higher CD4 cell counts.<sup>4,5</sup>

A central, unresolved issue is the CD4 cell count at which cART should be initiated, in patients who have not yet experienced an AIDS-defining event. The best way to address this question is to randomize AIDS-free HIV-1 infected patients to either initiate cART while in an upper CD4 cell count range or defer initiation until the upper threshold of a lower CD4 count range is reached. No such RCT has been conducted: the randomized evidence is limited to a sub-study in the Strategies for Management of Anti-Retroviral Therapy (SMART) trial,<sup>6</sup> suggesting that deferring cART initiation to CD4 <250 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, compared with starting at CD4 >350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, more than triples the hazard of AIDS or death and, unexpectedly, increases other serious adverse events.<sup>7</sup>

In the absence of randomized evidence, the question of when to start cART is best addressed in prospective observational studies of HIV-1 infected individuals. Most analyses of such data have, however, compared rates of AIDS and death from the time that patients started treatment<sup>8-10</sup> (upper panel of [Figure 1](#)). Such comparisons are problematic because they do not account for AIDS events or deaths that occur during the so called 'lead time', before the upper threshold of the lower CD4 range is reached (lower panel of [Figure 1](#)). These 'unseen events', as well as lead times, will be ignored in analyses where patients' follow up time is measured from the start of treatment, introducing lead-time bias.<sup>11,12</sup>

We analyzed data from a collaboration of cohort studies, employing novel methods to estimate the effect of initiating cART at different CD4 thresholds.

## Methods

We used data from seven cohort studies with patients followed up during the pre-cART era, and data from the Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) Cohort Collaboration of patients starting cART, to estimate rates of AIDS or death in patients starting cART in different CD4 ranges, taking into account the probability of progression before reaching the upper threshold of the lower CD4 count range. Patients whose presumed HIV transmission was by injection drug use (IDU) were analysed separately, because they have a high prevalence of comorbidities including chronic hepatitis C<sup>13</sup> and worse prognosis on cART.<sup>14,15</sup>

### *Cohorts and patients included in analyses*

*Pre-cART data:* Analyses of progression before starting cART included patients followed during the pre-cART era (July 1, 1989 to December 31, 1995) with a CD4 count in the range 0 to 550 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> in one of the following cohort studies: the Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study (MACS),<sup>16</sup> the Swiss HIV Cohort Study (SHCS),<sup>17</sup> the French Hospital Database on HIV (FHDH) ANRS CO4,<sup>18</sup> the Aquitaine Cohort ANRS CO3,<sup>19</sup> the Amsterdam Cohort Studies,<sup>20</sup> the South Alberta Clinic,<sup>21</sup> and the Concerted Action on Seroconversion to AIDS and Death in Europe (CASCADE) collaboration<sup>22</sup> (excluding patients who were also included in the other cohorts). Patients had regular CD4 cell count measurements at scheduled clinics and were followed for clinical AIDS events and death. A small number of patients who started cART before 1<sup>st</sup> January 1996 were excluded.

*On cART data:* Analyses of progression after starting cART included all patients enrolled in one of 15 cohorts participating in the ART Cohort Collaboration who started cART on or after 1<sup>st</sup> January 1998 with a CD4 count between 0 and 550 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> and did not have an AIDS diagnosis prior to starting cART. The ART Cohort Collaboration is a collaboration of cohort studies from Europe and North America, established with the aim of describing the prognosis of antiretroviral-naïve patients starting cART. The study design has been described in detail elsewhere.<sup>23-25</sup> Prospective cohort studies were eligible if they had enrolled at least 100 patients with HIV-1 infection aged 16 years or older who had not previously received antiretroviral treatment and who had started antiretroviral therapy with a combination of at least three drugs, including nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors, protease inhibitors, and/or non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors, with a median duration of follow-up of at least one year. All

cohorts provided anonymized data on a predefined set of demographic, laboratory and clinical variables.

Fifteen cohorts contributed on cART data to the present analysis, including the French Hospital Database on HIV (FHDH) ANRS CO4,<sup>18</sup> the Aquitaine Cohort ANRS CO3,<sup>19</sup> the AIDS Therapy Evaluation Netherlands project (ATHENA),<sup>26</sup> the Italian Cohort of Antiretroviral-Naive Patients (ICONA)<sup>27</sup>, the Swiss HIV Cohort Study (SHCS),<sup>17</sup> the Frankfurt HIV Cohort,<sup>28</sup> the Köln-Bonn Cohort,<sup>29</sup> the Collaborations in HIV Outcomes Research United States (CHORUS),<sup>30</sup> the 1917 Clinic Cohort University of Birmingham, Alabama,<sup>31</sup> the Veterans Aging Cohort Study (VACS),<sup>32</sup> the London Royal Free Hospital Cohort,<sup>33</sup> the British Columbia Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS,<sup>34</sup> the South Alberta Clinic,<sup>21</sup> the Proyecto para la Informatizacion del Seguimiento Clinico epidemiologico de los pacientes con Infección por VIH/SIDA (PISCIS),<sup>35</sup> and the EuroSIDA study,<sup>36</sup> which collects data from 20 countries in Europe and Argentina, (excluding patients who were also included in other ART-CC cohorts).

#### *Censoring and statistical analysis*

Patients who remained alive were censored at their last visit, plus 50% of the average time between visits for each cohort. For example, if a cohort had, on average, 6 months between follow-up visits, patients were censored at last visit plus 3 months. Patients with a gap of more than one year between clinic visits were considered lost to follow up and were censored at the beginning of the gap plus 50% of the average time between visits. Follow up of patients in the pre-cART era was administratively censored on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1995 and, in patients starting cART, at 6 years after starting cART or at the (cohort-specific) date of the close of the database.

Using on cART data, we derived Kaplan-Meier estimates of cumulative probabilities of progression to AIDS and death from the time of starting cART, according to CD4 cell count at initiation. We used Cox regression to estimate “naïve” hazard ratios (HRs) for AIDS or death (based on analyses ignoring lead-time and unseen AIDS and death events) comparing individuals with differing CD4 cell count category at initiation of cART. In sensitivity analyses, we examined whether adjusting for patient characteristics at the time of starting cART altered these naïve HRs.

To account for lead-time and unseen AIDS and death events, we used a method described by Cole et al.,<sup>12</sup> whereby missing data on lead-time and unseen events in the deferred arm are

recovered using multiple imputation<sup>37</sup>. Full details are given in the Web Appendix (available at <http://www. ...>). Using pre cART data, we modelled the distribution of times from the first CD4 measurement in the upper CD4 range to the upper threshold of the lower CD4 range (i.e., lead-time) and the probability of progression to AIDS or death before reaching the upper threshold of the lower CD4 range (i.e., unseen events). We repeated all comparisons using death alone as the endpoint, assuming that cART has no effect on deaths for two weeks and that an AIDS diagnosis will lead to immediate initiation of cART. Therefore in patients on cART deaths within two weeks of initiation were excluded, while in pre-cART data deaths included in analyses were those before reaching the upper threshold of the lower CD4 range, or within 2 weeks of an AIDS diagnosis. We examined whether progression rates differed between the earlier (1989-91) and later (1992-95) years of the pre-cART era, by splitting follow up time and including interaction terms in Cox regression models. We used random-effects regression models for log-transformed CD4 counts to estimate the average rate of decline in CD4 counts during the pre-cART era.

Based on the fitted distributions, imputation was used to create completed datasets, in which lead-times and unseen AIDS and death events were added to the on cART data, for patients in the deferred initiation group. We used Cox regression to estimate HRs comparing deferred with immediate initiation of cART for each completed dataset, then combined these using Rubin's formula.<sup>37</sup> We used generalized gamma distributions for the lead times and unseen events, after redistributing censored patients according to the proportions progressing to AIDS or death and reaching the upper threshold of the lower CD4 range to estimate the probability of progression before reaching the threshold. We examined the proportional hazards assumption by comparing progression rates in the first 2 years with rates from 2 years to the end of follow up (6 years).

We compared deferred with immediate initiation of cART in adjacent ranges of width 100 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>. We started with a comparison of initiation at 101-200 compared with deferring to 0-100 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, then compared initiation at 126-225 with deferring to 25-125 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> and, using successive increments of 25 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, made similar comparisons ending with a comparison of initiation at 451-550 with deferring to 351-450 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>. We conducted sensitivity analyses restricted to patients included in four cohorts that provided both pre-cART and on-cART data (the French Hospital Database on HIV, Aquitaine Cohort, Swiss HIV Cohort Study and the South Alberta Clinic Cohort). We also plotted the hazard ratios for the cumulative

effects of delayed initiation, compared with starting in the range 351-450 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, by multiplying hazard ratios for successive non-overlapping CD4 ranges: 250-350, 150-250 and 50-150 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>. Confidence intervals for the plotted cumulative effects were obtained using a Poisson approximation after decomposing the variance into contributions from each of the CD4 groups. All analyses were conducted using SAS<sup>TM</sup> version 9 (Cary, NC, USA) and Stata<sup>TM</sup> version 10.0 (College Station, TX, USA).

### *Role of the funding source*

Our sponsors had no role in the design, data collection, data analysis, data interpretation, or writing of the report. The corresponding author had full access to all data in the study and had final responsibility for the decision to submit for publication.

## **Results**

A total of 21,247 AIDS-free patients with presumed transmission not by IDU who were followed up during the pre-cART era, and 24,444 such patients followed from the start of cART within the ART Cohort Collaboration were included in the main analyses. A total of 4159 patients (17%) were followed for more than six years (at which time follow-up was censored) after starting cART. Patient characteristics are shown in [Table 1](#). Compared with patients starting cART, those followed up in the pre-cART era were younger, more likely to be men who have sex with men and more likely to develop AIDS or die during follow up. We found little evidence that progression rates differed between the earlier (1989-91) and later (1992-95) years of the pre-cART era ([Web Table 1](#)). The average annual decline in CD4 counts during the pre-cART era was 77 (95% CI 76, 78) cells/mm<sup>3</sup> per year. Among those starting cART, 9103 (37%) patients started with CD4 below 350 but above 200 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, with a further 23% of patients starting in the range 101-200 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, and 21% in the range 350-550 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>. A total of 1860 (7.6%) patients experienced AIDS-defining events after starting treatment and 808 (3.3%) died. Half of the patients initiated cART with a regimen including a protease inhibitor.

[Figure 2](#) shows cumulative probabilities of AIDS or death (upper panel) and death (lower panel) up to 6 years after starting cART, according to the range of CD4 count at the time of starting cART (0-50, 51-150, 151-250, 251-350, 351-450 and 451-550 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>). As reported previously,<sup>10,38</sup> the cumulative probability of AIDS and death increased dramatically with decreasing CD4 at the time of starting cART. However, this does not necessarily imply that

cART should be initiated in the higher CD4 count range, because this comparison does not account for lead-time or unseen AIDS and death events (see [Figure 1](#)).

[Table 2](#) compares rates of progressing to AIDS or death, in adjacent CD4 ranges of width 100 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, with successive increments of 25 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>. Note that results in overlapping ranges are not statistically independent of each other. The mean decline in CD4 count from the first measurement in the upper range to the upper threshold of the lower range varied from 48 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> for upper range 451-550 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> to 61 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> for upper range 101-200 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>. Estimated lead-times increase with decreasing CD4 cell count. This is at least partly because the variability of CD4 counts is greater at higher CD4 ranges, so that observed declines of more than 100 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> are more rapid. As expected, the estimated percent of patients progressing to AIDS or death before reaching the upper threshold of the lower CD4 range (the percentage experiencing unseen AIDS and death events) increases with decreasing CD4 count. The right-hand columns of [Table 2](#) show naïve HRs comparing the effects of deferring cART to a lower CD4 range, compared with starting in a higher CD4 range, and HRs after adjusting for lead-time and unseen events. Adjusting for age at initiation, sex and risk group (men who have sex with men versus other) did not materially alter naïve HRs ([Web Table 2](#)).

The adjusted results suggest that deferring cART until CD4 counts are in the range 251-350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> leads to increased rates of AIDS or death, compared with starting in the range 351-450 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> (HR 1.28, 95% CI 1.04-1.57). At the higher CD4 cell count ranges there is little evidence that deferred initiation of cART leads to higher rates of AIDS and death (HR 0.99; 95% CI: 0.76, 1.43 for the comparison of deferring to 351-450 compared with starting at 451-550 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>). Comparing adjusted and naïve results, the effect of accounting for unseen AIDS and death events outweighs the effect of lead-time in lower CD4 ranges, so that adjusted HRs exceed naïve HRs. In contrast, in higher CD4 ranges rates of unseen events are lower, and approximately balance the effect of lead-time, so that the naïve and adjusted HRs are similar. The upper panel of [Figure 3](#) illustrates the successive increase in the rates of AIDS or death as cART is deferred to lower CD cell count thresholds.

[Table 3](#) compares mortality rates resulting from deferring cART to lower compared with starting at higher CD4 ranges. As expected, mortality rates increase with declining CD4 cell count. Compared with [Table 2](#), confidence intervals for HRs are wider, because the number of

deaths is smaller than the number of combined AIDS and death endpoints. Because the proportions of patients with “unseen” deaths are smaller than the proportions with unseen AIDS and death events, the adjusted mortality hazard ratios are more similar to the naïve mortality hazard ratios than in the analyses of AIDS and death presented in Table 2. The adjusted HRs suggest that there is no adverse effect on mortality rates of deferring cART to the range 276-375 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> (HR 0.99, 95% CI 0.68-1.43, compared with starting in the range 376-475 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>). As illustrated in the lower panel of Figure 3, below these ranges, mortality increases as cART is deferred to lower CD4 ranges. Except in the highest CD4 ranges, the beneficial effects of earlier initiation were greater in the first two years’ follow up than in the period from 2 to 6 years’ follow up ([Web Table 3](#)).

We repeated analyses in patients with presumed transmission by IDU. A total of 4605 such patients were included in on-cART data: they experienced 653 AIDS or death events (334 deaths) during 15,141 years of follow up. There were 9,860 such patients followed during the pre-cART era: they experienced 905 AIDS or death events (823 deaths) during 27,182 years of follow up. [Web Table 4](#) shows estimated HRs for deferring compared with initiating cART in different CD4 ranges. For comparisons in which the threshold CD4 was low, estimated benefits of earlier initiation were less for patients whose presumed transmission was by IDU, than for other patients. At higher CD4 thresholds the estimated benefits of earlier initiation were broadly consistent with those in the main analyses presented in Tables 2 and 3, though as expected (given that the numbers of patients with transmission by IDU were smaller than in the main analyses), confidence intervals were wide. A total of 13084 (54%) patients on cART and 17993 (85%) patients followed during the pre-cART era were included in the four cohorts that contributed both on-cART and pre-cART data. [Web Table 5](#) shows the results of sensitivity analyses for the combined AIDS and death endpoint, restricted to these patients. Results were consistent with the main analyses: most hazard ratios for the adverse effect of deferring treatment were somewhat larger, particularly for low CD4 ranges.

[Figure 4](#) shows the cumulative effect of delayed initiation of cART, compared with starting in the range 350-450 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>. Deferring cART to CD4 cell counts of between 50 and 150 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> was associated with a hazard ratio of 5.67 (95% CI 4.83-6.65) for the combined endpoint AIDS and death, and a hazard ratio of 2.24 (95% CI 1.72-2.92) for mortality. In the ART Cohort Collaboration 37% of patients started cART below 150 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>.

## Discussion

This collaborative analysis of over 45,000 patients who were followed up in cohort studies in Europe and North America suggests that in AIDS-free HIV-1-infected individuals, deferring cART until CD4 cell counts are in the range 251-350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> leads to increased rates of the combined endpoint AIDS or death, compared with starting cART in the range 351-450 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>. As expected, the excess of AIDS or death associated with deferring cART became more pronounced as the CD4 threshold for starting cART decreased. Effects of deferring cART on mortality alone were less pronounced, but patterns were consistent with those for rates of the combined endpoint of AIDS or death. Beneficial effects of early initiation tended to be greater during the first two years of follow up than subsequently.

In contrast to previous studies that have compared rates of progression from the time of initiation of cART,<sup>8-10</sup> we accounted for both the treatment-free time spent by patients who defer treatment, and for the events that occur before initiation of treatment in these patients. Our analyses thus aimed to estimate the intervention effects that would be observed in studies in which patients were allocated either to starting treatment in a higher CD4 range or to deferring to a lower CD4 range. Because of the large number of patients included in this collaborative study, our analyses had reasonable power to detect differences in progression rates. In contrast, previous studies that compared mortality rates among patients who initiated cART and patients who delayed cART until reaching a lower CD4 cell range were limited by a small number of endpoints.<sup>39,40</sup> The analysis of the HIV Outpatient Study showed that mortality was reduced by 39% in patients who started cART in the range of 350-500 CD4 cells, compared to patients who deferred treatment to after the CD4 cell count had fallen to below 350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, however, this did not reach conventional levels of statistical significance (p=0.17).<sup>39</sup> Previous analyses that used the method employed here to account for lead-time and unseen AIDS and death events were also based on a much smaller number of patients.<sup>12,41</sup>

Data on large numbers of patients were combined in this collaborative analysis. This meant that we were able to compare relatively narrow CD4 strata, of width 100 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, with the aim of locating CD4 ranges within which earlier initiation has beneficial effects on rates of AIDS and death. Had we compared wider CD4 ranges, hazard ratios might have increased, at the cost of reduced clinical relevance. For example, a comparison of initiation in the range 301-500

cells/mm<sup>3</sup> with deferral to the range 101-300 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> would compare some patients who started at 490 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> with some patients who started at 110 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>.

Patients who experienced an AIDS event before initiation of cART were excluded: they have worse prognosis and are likely to start cART regardless of their CD4 count.<sup>42</sup> Analyses nevertheless included patients from many countries from Europe and North America, both in the pre-cART era and on cART, who were treated in different settings. The range of patients was broad: men and women, from teenagers to elderly people were included, and patients presumed to have been infected through heterosexual as well as homosexual sex between men were well represented. We analysed data from patients infected by IDU separately, to avoid possible confounding due to co-morbidities, deferred treatment and non-adherence in these patients. HIV-infected intravenous drug users have a high prevalence of comorbidities,<sup>13</sup> and worse prognosis on cART.<sup>14,15</sup> Given that our conclusions were similar in these patients, our results should be applicable to many patients starting cART or considering cART in industrialized countries. The clear disadvantages of delaying initiation of cART to below 200 CD4 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> may also have implications for resource-limited settings, where eligibility criteria for initiating cART are often advanced immunodeficiency or clinical disease.<sup>43</sup>

An important assumption made in these analyses is that progression rates and mortality in the pre-cART era, i.e. 1989 to 1995, are an appropriate reflection of what they would have been in the absence of cART in recent years. During the 1990s, the introduction of chemoprophylaxis, immunization, and better strategies for managing acute opportunistic infections contributed to preventing clinical progression and improving survival. In particular, the introduction of prophylaxis against *Pneumocystis jirovecii* pneumonia (PCP)<sup>44</sup> and for *Mycobacterium avium* complex (MAC) disease in 1993<sup>45</sup> were important. Although substantially less effective than cART, monotherapy (mainly with zidovudine)<sup>46</sup> became available in the late 1980s while dual therapy with two nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors<sup>47</sup> became available during the mid 1990s. These factors will have acted in opposite directions: early pre-cART era rates of AIDS and death may have been higher than contemporary rates in the absence of treatment because of lower rates of prophylaxis, while later pre-cART era rates may have been reduced because some patients were treated with mono or dual therapy. We suggest that biases introduced by these factors will have been limited. First, both prophylaxis and treatment were used mainly in patients with CD4 counts less than 200 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, in whom the adverse consequences of delayed

initiation of cART are clear. Second, monotherapy was of only limited, transient benefit,<sup>46</sup> while dual therapy became widely available only during late 1994 and early 1995. Third, as shown in Web Table 2 we found little evidence that rates of AIDS and death differed, comparing the earlier (1989-91) with later (1992-95) years of the pre-cART era within the different CD4 ranges. A proportion of patients included in the on-cART dataset and who started cART soon after 1998 had an initial cART regimen including an un-boosted protease inhibitor, which may have attenuated the beneficial effect of cART in the early portion of follow up.

As is the case for any observational study, our results may have been affected by confounding and selection biases, if patient characteristics associated with deferred initiation of cART are also predictive of progression rates on or off cART. We aimed to deal with such biases by excluding patient groups known to have higher progression rates. As well as excluding patients infected by IDU and those who experienced an AIDS event before initiation of cART, we excluded patients who started cART before 1998, when regimens were less effective than those now available.<sup>48,49</sup> Nonetheless it remains possible that our results are affected by unmeasured confounding factors. Only an RCT would overcome such concerns: moreover an RCT could take into account factors outside the scope of our analysis, including both AIDS-defining and non- AIDS defining events, severe and non-severe AIDS events, and drug related toxicities. Therefore, a definitive answer to the question of when to initiate cART will only be given when results become available from RCTs such as the Strategic Timing of Antiretroviral Treatment (START) trial, which aims to determine whether immediate initiation of cART is superior (in terms of morbidity and mortality) to deferral of cART until the CD4 count declines below 350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> in HIV-1 infected persons who are antiretroviral naïve with a CD4 count greater than 500 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>.

In the absence of definitive evidence from RCTs, it is necessary to rely on observational evidence in formulating guidelines on the CD4 cell count at which patients should start cART. When patients and their physicians consider when to initiate cART they must balance its beneficial effects on rates of progression to AIDS and death with a number of other issues.<sup>50,51</sup> Eradication of HIV from an individual is not currently possible,<sup>52</sup> so that treatment is expected to be lifelong. Antiretroviral drugs can be inconvenient to take, and have side effects that include nausea, diarrhea, and headache. cART has serious toxicities including lipodystrophy and lipoatrophy syndromes,<sup>53,54</sup> hepatitis, renal failure and mitochondrial toxicity,<sup>55</sup> and an increased

risk of cardiovascular disease.<sup>56</sup> However these toxicities may be to some extent avoidable through choice of cART regimen: for example increases in cardiovascular risk appear greater for protease inhibitors than for non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors,<sup>57</sup> and lipoatrophy is related to thymidine analogues.<sup>58</sup> Further, the hazard ratio of 1.28, comparing starting cART in the CD4 range 351-450 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> with deferring to 251-350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> represents only a small absolute difference in the risk of AIDS or death over the follow up period considered here.

Recent results from the SMART trial of structured treatment interruptions have also brought new perspectives to our understanding of the benefits and risks of cART.<sup>6</sup> In that trial, patients who had started cART at relatively high CD4 counts and subsequently interrupted therapy experienced higher rates not only of AIDS and death, but also of serious non-AIDS events including myocardial infarction, stroke, liver cirrhosis and renal failure. The analyses presented in this paper do not account for non-fatal serious non-AIDS events, which may be the major causes of morbidity and mortality at higher CD4 counts. It may be that non-AIDS deaths in untreated individuals account for the early high mortality hazard ratios for deferred compared with immediate initiation during the first two years of follow up (Web Table 3). Data from the EuroSIDA study show that rates of death from non-AIDS causes declined dramatically at the start of the HAART era.<sup>59,60</sup>

In conclusion, these findings should help guide physicians and patients in deciding when to initiate antiretroviral treatment. The evolution of guidelines has been likened to the swings of a pendulum,<sup>61,62</sup> from initial enthusiasm for early treatment<sup>63</sup> through caution due to concern over toxicities and the risk of resistance and loss of treatment options,<sup>64</sup> to more recent calls again for earlier treatment.<sup>65</sup> The International AIDS Society USA Panel recommended in August 2008 that antiretroviral therapy is started in individuals with CD4 < 350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, and that the decision should be individualized when the CD4 is greater than 350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>.<sup>66</sup> Recent US<sup>67</sup> and European guidelines make similar recommendations.<sup>68</sup> Because we found evidence that deferring treatment to CD4 < 350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> was associated with increased progression rates, and in the light of diminished concerns about toxicities and resistance<sup>51,69</sup>, our results support the minimum threshold for initiation of antiretroviral therapy being 350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>.

## **Acknowledgements**

We are grateful to all patients, doctors, nurses and other persons who were involved with the participating cohort studies. We would like to thank participating cohort members, in particular Caroline Sabin and Sarah Walker, who provided thoughtful review and feedback on the content of this manuscript.

## **Writing Committee**

Jonathan A C Sterne, Margaret May, Dominique Costagliola, Frank de Wolf, Andrew N Phillips, Ross Harris, Michele Jönsson Funk, Ronald Geskus, John Gill, Francois Dabis, Jose M Miró, Amy Justice, Bruno Ledergerber, Gerd Fätkenheuer, Robert Hogg, Antonella D'Arminio Monforte, Michael Saag, Colette Smith, Schlomo Staszewski, Matthias Egger, Stephen R. Cole.

## **Author Contributions**

Study conception & design: Jonathan A. C. Sterne, Matthias Egger, Dominique Costagliola, Andrew N Phillips, Margaret May, Stephen R. Cole

Data analysis: Margaret May, Ross Harris, Jonathan A C Sterne, Stephen R. Cole

Acquisition of data and/or interpretation of data: Dominique Costagliola, Frank de Wolf, Bruno Ledergerber, Matthias Egger, Andrew N Phillips, Michele Jönsson Funk, Ronald Geskus, John Gill, Francois Dabis, Jose M Miró, Amy C. Justice, Gerd Fätkenheuer, Robert Hogg, Antonella D'Arminio Monforte, Michael Saag, Colette Smith, Schlomo Staszewski, Margaret May, Ross Harris, Jonathan A. C. Sterne

Drafting the manuscript: Jonathan A. C. Sterne, Stephen R. Cole, Margaret May, Matthias Egger

Critical revision of the manuscript for important intellectual content: Dominique Costagliola, Frank de Wolf, Andrew N Phillips, Ross Harris, Michele Jönsson Funk, Ronald Geskus, John Gill, Francois Dabis, Jose M Miró, Amy C. Justice, Bruno Ledergerber, Gerd Fätkenheuer, Robert Hogg, Antonella D'Arminio Monforte, Michael Saag, Colette Smith, Schlomo Staszewski

Final manuscript approval: Jonathan A C Sterne, Margaret May, Dominique Costagliola, Frank de Wolf, Andrew N Phillips, Ross Harris, Michele Jönsson Funk, Ronald Geskus, John Gill, Francois Dabis, Jose M Miró, Amy C. Justice, Bruno Ledergerber, Gerd Fätkenheuer, Robert Hogg, Antonella D'Arminio Monforte, Michael Saag, Colette Smith, Schlomo Staszewski, Matthias Egger, Stephen R. Cole

## **Conflict of interest statements**

JACS has received travel grants from GlaxoSmithKline and honoraria from Gilead Sciences

MM has received travel grants from GlaxoSmithKline

DC has received travel grants, consultancy fees, and honoraria from various pharmaceutical companies including Abbott, GlaxoSmithKline, Bristol-Myers-Squibb, Gilead, Roche and Boehringer-Ingelheim.

FdW none

AP has received reimbursement for either/or: attending a symposium; a fee for speaking; a fee for organising education; funds for research; funds for a member of staff; fees for consulting from various pharmaceutical companies including: Roche, BMS, GSK, Abbott, Boehringer-Ingelheim, Gilead, Tibotec, Oxxon Therapeutics

RHarris has received travel grants from GlaxoSmithKline

MF has received travel grants from GlaxoSmithKline and salary support through an unrestricted educational grant to the University of North Carolina from GlaxoSmithKline.

RG none

JG has served on advisory boards and or received research grants through University of Calgary from Abbott, Bristol Myers Squibb, Boehringer Ingelheim, Gilead Sciences, GlaxoSmithKline, Merck, Pfizer, Roche and Tibotec.

FD has served on advisory boards and or received research grants from Boehringer Ingelheim, Gilead Sciences, GlaxoSmithKline, Roche and Tibotec.

JM none

AJ none

BL has received travel grants, grants or honoraria from Abbott, Aventis, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Gilead, GlaxoSmithKline, Merck Sharp & Dohme, Roche and Tibotec.

GF has received travel grants, grants or honoraria from Abbott, Boehringer-Ingelheim, Bristol Myers Squibb, Gilead, GlaxoSmithKline, Merck Sharp and Dohme, Pfizer, Roche, Schering-Plough and Tibotec.

RHogg has received travel grants and grant support from Abbott, Boehringer Ingelheim, GlaxoSmithKline, and Merck.

AdA none

MS has received grant / research support from or acted as a consultant to Achillion Pharmaceutica, Boehringer-Ingelheim, Gilead Sciences, GlaxoSmithKline, Merck, Panacos, Pfizer, Progenics, Roche Laboratories, Serono, Tibotec, Avexa, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Monogram Biosciences, Progenics and Virco

CS none

SS has received honoraria for either/or: attending a symposium; a fee for speaking; funds for research; for my participation in the advisory boards and for lectures at satellite symposia from various pharmaceutical companies including: GlaxoSmithKline, Abbott, Gilead Sciences, Boehringer Ingelheim, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Tibotec and Roche.

ME none

SC none

## **Funding**

The ART Cohort Collaboration is supported by the UK Medical Research Council grant G0700820. Sources of funding of individual cohorts include the Agence Nationale de Recherche contre le SIDA (ANRS), the Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale (INSERM), the French, Italian, Spanish and Swiss Ministries of Health, The Swiss HIV Cohort Study, supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation (Grant No. 33CSC0-108787) the

Stichting HIV Monitoring, the European Commission, the British Columbia and Alberta Governments, the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the VHA Office of Research and Development and unrestricted grants from GlaxoSmithKline, Roche and Boehringer-Ingelheim. Supported in part by the “Spanish Network for AIDS Research (RIS; ISCIII-RETIC RD06/006). CASCADE has been funded through grants BMH4-CT97-2550, QLK2-2000-01431, QLRT-2001-01708 and LSHP-CT-2006-018949 from the European Union.

## **The Antiretroviral Therapy Cohort Collaboration (ART-CC) Study Group**

### **Steering Committee**

Jordi Casabona (PISCIS), Geneviève Chêne (Aquitaine), Dominique Costagliola (FHDH), François Dabis (Aquitaine), Antonella D’Arminio Monforte (ICONA), Julia del Amo (CoRIS-MD), Frank de Wolf (ATHENA), Matthias Egger (SHCS), Gerd Fätkenheuer (Köln/Bonn), John Gill (South Alberta Clinic), Jodie Guest (HAVACS), Robert Hogg (BCCfE-HIV), Amy Justice (VACS), Mari Kitahata (Washington), Fiona Lampe (Royal Free), Bruno Ledergerber (SHCS), Amanda Mocroft (EuroSIDA), Peter Reiss (ATHENA), Michael Saag (Alabama), Schlomo Staszewski (Frankfurt).

### **Coordinating Team**

Matthias Egger, Margaret May, Ross Harris, Jonathan A C Sterne (Principal Investigator)

## **French Hospital Database on HIV (FHDH)**

### **Scientific committee**

S Abgrall, F Barin, M Bentata, E Billaud, F Boué, C Burty, A Cabié, D Costagliola, L Cotte, P De Truchis, X Duval, C Duvivier, P Enel, L Fredouille-Heripret, J Gasnault, C Gaud, J Gilquin, S Grabar, C. Katlama, MA Khuong, JM Lang, AS Lascaux, O Launay, A Mahamat, M Mary-Krause, S Matheron, JL Meynard, J Pavie, G Pialoux, F Pilorgé, I Poizot-Martin, C Pradier, J Reynes, E Rouveix, A Simon, P Tattevin, H Tissot-Dupont, JP Viard, N Viget.

### **DMI2 coordinating center**

French Ministry of Health (A Pariente-Khayat, Valérie Salomon), Technical Hospitalisation Information Agency, ATIH (N Jacquemet, A Rivet).

### **Statistical analysis center**

INSERM U720 (S Abgrall, D Costagliola, S Grabar, M Guiguet, I Kousignian, E Lanoy, L Lièvre, M Mary-Krause, V Potard, H Selinger-Leneman) .

### **CISIH Paris area**

CISIH de Bichat-Claude Bernard (Hôpital Bichat-Claude Bernard: E Bouvet, B Crickx, JL Ecobichon, C Leport, S Matheron, C Picard-Dahan, P Yeni), CISIH de Paris-Centre Ouest (Hôpital Européen Georges Pompidou: D Tisne-Dessus, L Weiss; GH Tarnier-Cochin: D Salmon, D Sicard; Hôpital Saint-Joseph: I Auperin, J Gilquin; Hôpital Necker adultes: L Roudière, JP Viard), CISIH de Paris-Sud (Hôpital Antoine Bécère: F Boué, R Fior; Hôpital de Bicêtre: JF Delfraissy, C Goujard; Hôpital Henri Mondor: C Jung, Ph Lesprit; Hôpital Paul Brousse), CISIH de Paris-Est (Hôpital Saint-Antoine: N Desplanque, JL Meynard, MC Meyohas, O Picard; Hôpital Tenon: J Cadranel, C Mayaud, G Pialoux), CISIH de Pitié-Salpêtrière (GH Pitié Salpêtrière: F Bricaire, S Herson, C Katlama, A Simon), CISIH de Saint-Louis (Hôpital Saint-Louis: JP Clauvel, JM Decazes, L Gerard, JM Molina; GH Lariboisière-Fernand Widal: M Diemer, P Sellier), CISIH 92 (Hôpital Ambroise Paré: H Berthé, C Dupont; Hôpital Louis

Mourier : C Chandemerle, E Mortier; Hôpital Raymond Poincaré: P de Truchis), CISIH 93 (Hôpital Avicenne: M Bentata, P Honoré; Hôpital Jean Verdier: V Jeantils, S Tassi; Hôpital Delafontaine: D Mechali, B Taverner).

### **CISIH Outside Paris area**

CISIH Auvergne-Loire (CHU de Clermont-Ferrand: F Gourdon, H Laurichesse; CHRU de Saint-Etienne: A Fresard, F Lucht); CISIH de Bourgogne-Franche Comté (CHRU de Besançon; CHRU de Dijon; CH de Belfort: P Eglinger, JP Faller; CHRU de Reims); CISIH de Caen (CHRU de Caen: C Bazin, R Verdon), CISIH de Grenoble (CHU de Grenoble), CISIH de Lyon (Hôpital de la Croix-Rousse: A Boibieux, D Peyramond; Hôpital Edouard Herriot: JM Livrozet, JL Touraine; Hôtel-Dieu: L Cotte, C Trepo), CISIH de Marseille (Hôpital de la Conception: I Ravaux, H Tissot-Dupont; Hôpital Nord: JP Delmont, J Moreau; Institut Paoli Calmettes: JA Gastaut; Hôpital Sainte-Marguerite: I Poizot-Martin, F Retornaz, J Soubeyrand; CHG d'Aix-En-Provence: T Allegre, PA Blanc; Centre pénitentiaire des Baumettes: A Galinier, JM Ruiz; CH d'Arles; CH d'Avignon: G Lepeu; CH de Digne Les Bains: P Granet-Brunello; CH de Gap: JP Esterni, L Pelissier; CH de Martigues: R Cohen-Valensi, M Nezri; CHI de Toulon: S Chadapaud, A Laffeuillade), CISIH de Montpellier (CHU de Montpellier: J Reynes; CHG de Nîmes), CISIH de Nancy (Hôpital de Brabois: T May, C Rabaud), CISIH de Nantes (CHRU de Nantes: E Billaud, F Raffi), CISIH de Nice (Hôpital Archet 1: P Pugliese, C Pradier; CHG Antibes Juan les Pins), CISIH de Rennes (CHU de Rennes: C Arvieux, C Michelet), CISIH de Rouen (CHRU de Rouen: F Borsa-Lebas, F Caron), CISIH de Strasbourg (CHRU de Strasbourg: P Fraisse, JM Lang, D Rey; CH de Mulhouse), CISIH de Toulouse (CHU Purpan: E Arlet-Suau, L Cuzin, P Massip, MF Thiercelin Legrand; Hôpital la Grave; CHU Rangueil), CISIH de Tourcoing-Lille (CH Gustave Dron; CH de Tourcoing: Y Yasdanpanah), CISIH de Tours (CHRU de Tours; CHU Trousseau).

### **Overseas**

CISIH de Guadeloupe (CHRU de Pointe-à-Pitre), CISIH de Guyane (CHG de Cayenne: R Pradinaud, M Sobesky), CISIH de Martinique (CHRU de Fort-de-France), CISIH de La Réunion (CHD Félix Guyon: C Gaud, M Contant).

### **Italian Cohort of Antiretroviral-Naive Patients (ICONA)**

M. Italy: Ancona: M Montroni, G Scalise, MC Braschi, A Riva. Aviano (PN): U Tirelli, F Martellotta. Bari: G Pastore, N Ladisa. Bergamo: F Suter, C Arici. Bologna: F Chiodo, V Colangeli, C Fiorini. Brescia: G Carosi, G Cristini, C Torti, C Minardi, D Bertelli. Busto Arsizio: T Quirino. Cagliari: PE Manconi, P Piano. Catanzaro: L Cosco, A Scerbo. Chieti: J Vecchiet, M D'Alessandro. Como: D Santoro, L Pusterla. Cremona: G Carnevale, S Lorenzotti. Cuggiono: P Viganò, M Mena. Ferrara: F Ghinelli, L Sighinolfi. Firenze: F Leoncini, F Mazzotta, M Pozzi, S Lo Caputo. Foggia: B Grisorio, S Ferrara. Galatina (LE): P Grima, PF Grima. Genova: G Pagano, G Cassola, A Alessandrini, R Piscopo. Grosseto: M Toti, M Trezzi. Latina: F Soscia, L Tacconi. Lecco: A Orani, P Perini. Lucca: A Scasso, A Vincenti. Macerata: F Chiodera, P Castelli. Mantova: A Scalzini, L Palvarini. Milano: M Moroni, A Lazzarin, G Rizzardini, L Caggese, A d'Arminio Monforte, P Cicconi, A Galli, S Merli, C Pastecchia, MC Moioli. Modena: R Esposito, C Mussini. Napoli: N Abrescia, A Chirianni, CM Izzo, M Piazza, M De Marco, R Viglietti, E Manzillo, S Nappa. Palermo: A Colomba, V Abbadessa, T Prestileo, S Mancuso. Parma: C Ferrari, P Pizzaferrì. Pavia: G Filice, L Minoli, R Bruno, S Novati. Perugia: F Baldelli, G Camanni. Pesaro: E Petrelli, A Cioppi. Piacenza: F Alberici, A Ruggieri. Pisa: F Menichetti, C Martinelli. Potenza: C De Stefano, A La Gala. Ravenna: G Ballardini, E Rizzo.

Reggio Emilia: G Magnani, MA Ursitti. Rimini: M Arlotti, P Ortolani. Roma: R Cauda, F Dianzani, G Ippolito, A Antinori, G Antonucci, M Ciardi, P Narciso, N Petrosillo, V Vullo, A De Luca, M Zaccarelli, R Acinapura, P De Longis, MP Trotta, P Noto, M Lichtner, MR Capobianchi, F Carletti, E Girardi, P Pezzotti, G Rezza. Sassari: MS Mura, M Mannazzu. Torino: P Caramello, G Di Perri, GC Orofino, M Sciandra. Varese: PA Grossi, C Basilico. Viterbo: A Poggio, G Bottari. Venezia: E Raise, F Ebo. Vicenza: G Pellizzer, D Buonfrate. Taranto: F Resta, K Loso. London, UK: A Cozzi Lepri.

### **Swiss HIV Cohort Study (SHCS)**

M. Battegay, E. Bernasconi, J. Böni, HC Bucher, Ph. Bürgisser, A. Calmy, S. Cattacin, M. Cavassini, R. Dubs, M. Egger, L. Elzi, M. Fischer, M. Flepp, A. Fontana, P. Francioli (President of the SHCS, Centre Hospitalier Universitaire Vaudois, CH-1011- Lausanne), H. Furrer (Chairman of the Clinical and Laboratory Committee), C. Fux, M. Gorgievski, H. Günthard (Chairman of the Scientific Board), H. Hirsch, B. Hirschel, I. Hösli, Ch. Kahlert, L. Kaiser, U. Karrer, C. Kind, Th. Klimkait, B. Ledergerber, G. Martinetti, B. Martinez, N. Müller, D. Nadal, M. Opravil, F. Paccaud, G. Pantaleo, A. Rauch, S. Regenass, M. Rickenbach (Head of Data Center), C. Rudin (Chairman of the Mother & Child Substudy), P. Schmid, D. Schultze, J. Schüpbach, R. Speck, P. Taffé, A. Telenti, A. Trkola, P. Vernazza, R. Weber, S. Yerly.

### **AIDS Therapy Evaluation project Netherlands (ATHENA)**

L.A.Gras (bio-statistician), A.I. van Sighem (senior researcher), C. Smit (epidemiologist), F. de Wolf (director)

#### **Treating physicians**

(\*Site coordinating physicians) Academisch Medisch Centrum bij de Universiteit van Amsterdam - Amsterdam: Dr. J.M. Prins\*, Dr. J. Branger, Dr. J.K.M.Eeftinck-Schattenkerk, Dr. S.E. Geerlings, Dr. M.H. Godfried, Drs. E.D. Kerver, Prof. dr. J.M.A. Lange, Dr. K.D. Lettinga, Dr. J.T.M. van der Meer, Dr. F.J.B. Nellen, Drs. D.P. Olszyna, Dr. T. van der Poll, Prof. dr. P. Reiss, Drs. Th.A. Ruys, Drs. R. Steingrover, Drs. M. van der Valk, Drs. J.N. Vermeulen, Drs. S.M.E. Vrouenraets, Dr. M. van Vugt, Dr. F.W.M.N. Wit. Academisch Ziekenhuis Maastricht - Maastricht: Dr. G. Schreij\*, Dr. S. van der Geest, Dr. S. Lowe, Dr. A. Verbon. Catharina Ziekenhuis - Eindhoven: Dr. B. Bravenboer\*. Emma Kinderziekenhuis - AMC Amsterdam: Prof. dr. T.W. Kuijpers, Drs. D. Pajkrt, Dr. H.J. Scherpbier. Erasmus MC - Rotterdam: Dr. M.E. van der Ende\*, Dr. I.C. Gyssens, Drs. M. van der Feltz, Drs. Mendoca de Melo, Dr. J.L. Nouwen, Dr. B.J.A. Rijnders, Dr. T.E.M.S. de Vries. Erasmus MC - Sophia - Rotterdam: Dr. G. Driessen, Dr. M. van der Flier, Dr. N.G. Hartwig. Haga Ziekenhuis, locatie Leyenburg - Den Haag: Dr. R.H. Kauffmann\*, Drs. K. Pogány. Isala Klinieken - Zwolle: Dr. P.H.P. Groeneveld\*. Kennemer Gasthuis - Haarlem: Prof. dr. R.W. ten Kate\*, Dr. R. Soetekouw. Leids Universitair Medisch Centrum - Leiden: Dr. F.P. Kroon\*, Prof. dr. P.J. van den Broek, Prof. dr. J.T. van Dissel, Dr. E.F. Schippers. Medisch Centrum Alkmaar - Alkmaar: Dr. W. Bronsveld\*. Medisch Centrum Haaglanden - locatie Westeinde - Den Haag: Dr. R. Vriesendorp\*, Dr. F.J.F. Jeurissen. Medisch Centrum Leeuwarden - Leeuwarden: Dr. D. van Houte\*, Dr. M.B. Polée. Medisch Centrum Rijnmond Zuid - locatie Clara - Rotterdam: Dr. J.G. den Hollander\*. Medisch Spectrum Twente - Enschede: Dr. C.H.H. ten Napel\*, Dr. G.J. Kootstra. Onze Lieve Vrouwe Gasthuis - Amsterdam. Prof. dr. K. Brinkman\*, Drs. G.E.L. van den Berk, Dr. W.L. Blok, Dr. P.H.J. Frissen, Drs. W.E.M. Schouten. St. Medisch Centrum Jan van Goyen - Amsterdam: Dr. A. van

Eeden\*. Slotervaart Ziekenhuis - Amsterdam: Dr. J.W. Mulder\*, Dr. E.C.M. van Gorp, Dr. J. Wagenaar. St. Elisabeth Ziekenhuis - Tilburg: Dr. J.R. Juttman\*, Dr. C. van de Heul, Dr. M.E.E. van Kasteren. St. Lucas Andreas Ziekenhuis - Amsterdam: Dr. J. Veenstra\*, Dr. W.L.E. Vasmel. Universitair Medisch Centrum St. Radboud - Nijmegen: Dr. P.P. Koopmans\*, Drs. C. Bleeker, Dr. R. van Crevel, Prof. dr. R. de Groot, Drs. H.J.M. ter Hofstede, Dr. M. Keuter, Dr. A.J.A.M. van der Ven. Universitair Medisch Centrum Groningen - Groningen: Dr. H.G. Sprenger\*, Dr. S. van Assen, Dr. J.T.M. van Leeuwen. Universitair Medisch Centrum Groningen - Beatrix Kliniek - Groningen: Dr. R. Doedens, Dr. E.H. Scholvinck. Universitair Medisch Centrum Utrecht - Utrecht: Prof. dr. I.M. Hoepelman\*, Dr. M.M.E. Schneider, Prof. dr. M.J.M. Bonten, Prof. dr. J.C.C. Borleffs, Dr. P.M. Ellerbroek, Drs. C.A.J.J. Jaspers, Dr. T. Mudrikova. Wilhelmina Kinderziekenhuis - UMC Utrecht: Dr. S.P.M. Geelen, Dr. T. Faber, Dr. T.F.W. Wolfs. VU Medisch Centrum - Amsterdam: Prof. dr. S.A. Danner\*, Dr. M.A. van Agtmael, Drs. W.F.W. Bierman, Drs. F.A.P. Claessen, M.E. Hillebrand-Haverkort, Dr. R.M. Perenboom, Drs. A. Rijkeboer, Drs. M.G.A. van Vonderen. Ziekenhuis Rijnstate - Arnhem: Dr. C. Richter\*, Drs. J. van der Berg, Dr. E.H. Gisolf. Ziekenhuis Walcheren - Vlissingen: Dr. A.A. Tanis\*. St. Elisabeth Hospitaal/Stichting Rode Kruis Bloedbank - Willemstad, Curaçao: Dr. A.J. Duits, Dr. K. Winkel.

### **Virologists**

Academisch Medisch Centrum bij de Universiteit van Amsterdam – Amsterdam: Dr. N.K.T. Back, Dr. M.E.G. Bakker, Dr. H.L. Zaaier. Prof. dr. B. Berkhout, Dr. S. Jurriaans. CLB Stichting Sanquin Bloedvoorziening - Amsterdam: Dr. Th. Cuijpers. Onze Lieve Vrouwe Gasthuis - Amsterdam: Dr. P.J.G.M. Rietra, Dr. K.J. Roozendaal. Slotervaart Ziekenhuis - Amsterdam: Drs. W. Pauw, Drs. P.H.M. Smits, Dr. A.P. van Zanten. VU Medisch Centrum – Amsterdam: Dr. B.M.E. von Blomberg, Dr. A. Pettersson, Dr. P. Savelkoul. Ziekenhuis Rijnstate – Arnhem: Dr. C.M.A. Swanink. HAGA, ziekenhuis, locatie Leyenburg - Den Haag: Dr. P.F.H. Franck, Dr. A.S. Lampe. Medisch Centrum Haaglanden, locatie Westeinde - Den Haag: Drs. C.L. Jansen. Streeklaboratorium Twente - Enschede: Dr. R. Hendriks. Streeklaboratorium Groningen - Groningen: Dr. C.A. Benne. Streeklaboratorium Volksgezondheid Kennemerland - Haarlem: Dr. J. Schirm, Dr. D. Veenendaal. Laboratorium voor de Volksgezondheid in Friesland - Leeuwarden: Dr. H. Storm, Drs. J. Weel, Drs. J.H. van Zeijl. Leids Universitair Medisch Centrum - Leiden: Dr. H.C.J. Claas, Prof. dr. A.C.M. Kroes. Academisch Ziekenhuis Maastricht - Maastricht: Prof. dr. C.A.M.V.A. Bruggeman, Drs. V.J. Goossens. Universitair Medisch Centrum St. Radboud - Nijmegen: Prof. dr. J.M.D. Galama, Dr. W.J.G. Melchers, Dr. Verduyn-Lunel. Erasmus MC - Rotterdam: Dr. G.J.J. van Doornum, Dr. H.G.M. Niesters, Prof. dr. A.D.M.E. Osterhaus, Dr. M. Schutten. St. Elisabeth Ziekenhuis - Tilburg: Dr. A.G.M. Buiting. Universitair Medisch Centrum Utrecht - Utrecht: Dr. C.A.B. Boucher, Dr. E. Boel, Dr. R. Schuurman. Catharina Ziekenhuis - Eindhoven: Dr. A.F. Jansz, drs. M. Wulf.

### **Pharmacologists**

Medisch Centrum Alkmaar - Alkmaar: Dr. A. Veldkamp. Slotervaart Ziekenhuis - Amsterdam: Prof. dr. J.H. Beijnen, Dr. A.D.R. Huitema. Universitair Medisch Centrum St. Radboud - Nijmegen: Dr. D.M. Burger. Academisch Medisch Centrum bij de Universiteit van Amsterdam – Amsterdam: Drs. H.J.M. van Kan.

### **The Multicenter Study Group on EuroSIDA**

Argentina (M Losso), A Duran, Hospital JM Ramos Mejia, Buenos Aires. Austria (N Vetter) Pulmologisches Zentrum der Stadt Wien, Vienna. Belarus (I Karpov), A Vassilenko, Belarus

State Medical University, Minsk. Belgium (N Clumeck) S De Wit, B Poll, Saint-Pierre Hospital, Brussels; R Colebunders, Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp Czech Republic (L Machala) H Rozsypal, Faculty Hospital Bulovka, Prague; D Sedlacek, Charles University Hospital, Plzen. Denmark (J Nielsen) J Lundgren, T Benfield, O Kirk, Hvidovre Hospital, Copenhagen; J Gerstoft, T Katzenstein, A-B E Hansen, P Skinhøj, Rigshospitalet, Copenhagen; C Pedersen, Odense University Hospital, Odense. Estonia (K Zilmer) West-Tallinn Central Hospital, Tallinn. France (C Katlama) Hôpital de la Pitié-Salpêtrière, Paris; J-P Viard, Hôpital Necker-Enfants Malades, Paris; P-M Girard, Hospital Saint-Antoine, Paris; T Saint-Marc, Hôpital Edouard Herriot, Lyon; P Vanhems, University Claude Bernard, Lyon; C Pradier, Hôpital de l'Archet, Nice; F Dabis, Unité INSERM, Bordeaux. Germany M Dietrich, C Manegold, Bernhard-Nocht-Institut for Tropical Medicine, Hamburg; J van Lunzen, H-J Stellbrink, Eppendorf Medizinische Kernklinik, Hamburg; S Staszewski, M Bickel, JW Goethe University Hospital, Frankfurt; F-D Goebel, Medizinische Poliklinik, Munich; G. Fätkenheuer, Universität Köln, Cologne; J Rockstroh, Universitäts Klinik Bonn; R Schmidt, Medizinische Hochschule Hannover. Greece (J Kosmidis) P Gargalianos, H Sambatakou, J Perdios, Athens General Hospital, Athens; G Panos, A Filandras, E Karabatsaki, 1st IKA Hospital, Athens. Hungary (D Banhegyi) Szent László Hospital, Budapest. Ireland (F Mulcahy) St. James's Hospital, Dublin. Israel (I Yust) D Turner, M Burke, Ichilov Hospital, Tel Aviv; S Pollack, G Hassoun, Rambam Medical Center, Haifa; Z Sthoeger, Kaplan Hospital, Rehovot; S Maayan, Hadassah University Hospital, Jerusalem. Italy (A Chiesi) Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome; R Esposito, R Borghi, Università Modena, Modena; C Arici, Ospedale Riuniti, Bergamo; R Pristera, Ospedale Generale Regionale, Bolzano; F. Mazzotta, A Gabbuti, Ospedale S Maria Annunziata, Firenze; Vullo, M Lichtner, University di Roma la Sapienza, Rome; A Chirianni, E Montesarchio, Presidio Ospedaliero AD. Cotugno, Monaldi Hospital, Napoli; G Antonucci, F Iacomi, P Narciso, M Zaccarelli, Istituto Nazionale Malattie Infettive Lazzaro Spallanzani, Rome; A Lazzarin, R Finazzi, Ospedale San Raffaele, Milan; A D'Arminio Monforte, Osp. L. Sacco, Milan. Latvia (L Viksna) Infectology Centre of Latvia, Riga. Lithuania (S Chaplinskas) Lithuanian AIDS Centre, Vilnius. Luxembourg (R Hemmer), T Staub, Centre Hospitalier, Luxembourg. Netherlands (P Reiss) Academisch Medisch Centrum bij de Universiteit van Amsterdam, Amsterdam. Norway (J Bruun) A Maeland, V Ormaasen, Ullevål Hospital, Oslo. Poland (B Knysz) J Gasiorowski, Medical University, Wroclaw; A Horban, Centrum Diagnostyki i Terapii AIDS, Warsaw; D Prokopowicz, A Wiercinska-Drapalo, Medical University, Bialystok; A Boron-Kaczmarek, M Pynka, Medical University, Szczecin; M Beniowski, E Mularska, Osrodek Diagnostyki i Terapii AIDS, Chorzow; H Trocha, Medical University, Gdansk. Portugal (F Antunes) E Valadas, Hospital Santa Maria, Lisbon; K Mansinho, Hospital de Egas Moniz, Lisbon; F Matez, Hospital Curry Cabral, Lisbon. Romania (D Duiculescu) Spitalul de Boli Infectioase si Tropicale: Dr. Victor Babes, Bucarest; A Streinu-Cercel, Institute of Infectious Diseases, Bucarest. Russia E Vinogradova, St Petersburg AIDS Centre; A Rakhmanova, Medical Academy Botkin Hospital, St Petersburg. Serbia & Montenegro (D Jevtovic), The Institute for Infectious and Tropical Diseases, Belgrade. Slovakia (M Mokráš) D Staneková, Dérer Hospital, Bratislava. Spain (J González-Lahoz) M Sánchez-Conde, T García-Benayas, L Martin-Carbonero, V Soriano, Hospital Carlos III, Madrid; B Clotet, A Jou, J Conejero, C Tural, Hospital Germans Trias i Pujol, Badalona; JM Gatell, JM Miró, Hospital Clinic i Provincial, Barcelona. Sweden (A Blaxhult) Karolinska University Hospital, Solna; A Karlsson, Karolinska University Hospital, Stockholm; P Pehrson, Karolinska University Hospital, Huddinge. Switzerland (B Ledergerber) R Weber, University Hospital, Zürich; P Francioli, A Telenti, Centre Hospitalier Universitaire

Vaudois, Lausanne; B Hirschel, V Soravia-Dunand, Hospital Cantonal Universitaire de Geneve, Geneve; H Furrer, Inselspital Bern, Bern. Ukraine (E Kravchenko) N Chentsova, Kyiv Centre for AIDS, Kyiv. United Kingdom (S Barton) St. Stephen's Clinic, Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, London; AM Johnson, D Mercey, Royal Free and University College London Medical School, London (University College Campus); A Phillips, MA Johnson, A Mocroft, Royal Free and University College Medical School, London (Royal Free Campus); M Murphy, Medical College of Saint Bartholomew's Hospital, London; J Weber, G Scullard, Imperial College School of Medicine at St. Mary's, London; M Fisher, Royal Sussex County Hospital, Brighton; R Brettle, Western General Hospital, Edinburgh. Virology group C Loveday, B Clotet (Central Coordinators) plus ad hoc virologists from participating sites in the EuroSIDA Study. Steering Committee Francisco Antunes; Anders Blaxhult; Nathan Clumeck; Jose Gatell; Andrzej Horban; Anne Johnson; Christine Katlama; Bruno Ledergerber (chair); Clive Loveday; Andrew Phillips; Peter Reiss; Stefano Vella. Coordinating centre staff J Lundgren (project leader), I Gjørup, O Kirk, N Friis-Moeller, A Mocroft, A Cozzi-Lepri, W Bannister, D Mollerup, D Podlevkareva, C Holkmann Olsen, J Kjær.

### **Collaborations in HIV Outcomes Research US (CHORUS)**

Stephen Raffanti, Douglas Dieterch, Amy Justice, Stephen Becker, Anthony Scarsella, Gregory Fusco, Bernard Most, Rukmini Balu, Rashida Rana, Robin Beckerman, Theodore Ising, Jennifer Fusco, Renae Irek, Bernadette Johnson, Ashwin Hirani, Edwin DeJesus, Gerald Pierone, Philip Lackey, Chip Irek, Alison Johnson, John Burdick, Saul Leon, Joseph Arch.

### **Frankfurt HIV Cohort, Germany**

Schlomo Staszewski, Eilke B. Helm, Amina Carlebach, Axel Müller, Annette Haberl, Gabi Nisius, Tessa Lennemann, Christoph Stephan, Markus Bickel, Manfred Mösch, Peter Gute, Leo Locher, Thomas Lutz, Stephan Klauke, Gabi Knecht, Pavel Khaykin (Clinical Group); Hans W. Doerr, Martin Stürmer (Virology Group); Errol Babacan (Scientific Advisor and Data Management); Nils von Hentig (Pharmacology Group).

### **Aquitaine Cohort, France**

#### **Epidemiology, Methodology**

M. Bruyand, G. Chêne, F. Dabis (Principal Investigator), S. Lawson-Ayayi, R. Thiébaud.

#### **Infectious diseases, Internal Medicine**

M. Bonarek, F. Bonnal, F. Bonnet, N. Bernard, O. Caubet, L. Caunègre, C. Cazanave, J. Ceccaldi, FA Dauchy, C. De La Taille, S. De Witte, M. Dupon, P. Duffau, H. Dutronc, S. Farbos, C. Greib, D. Lacoste, S. Lafarie, P. Loste, D. Malvy, P. Mercié, P. Morlat, D. Neau, A. Ochoa, JL. Pellegrin, JM. Ragnaud, S. Tchamgoué, JF. Viallard.

#### **Immunology, Virology, Pharmacology, Pharmacovigilance**

Immunology: P. Blanco, JF. Moreau. Virology: H. Fleury, ME. Lafon, B. Masquelier, I. Pellegrin. Pharmacology: D. Breilh. Pharmacovigilance: G. Miremont-Salamé.

#### **Data collection**

MJ. Blaizeau, M. Decoin, S. Delveaux, C. Hannapier, S. Labarrère, V. Lavignolle-Aurillac, B. Uwamaliya-Nziyumvira.

#### **Data management**

S. Geffard, G. Palmer, D. Touchard.

**Scientific committee**

M. Dupon, M. Longy-Boursier, P. Morlat, JL. Pellegrin, JM. Ragnaud and F. Dabis.

**British Columbia Centre for Excellence in HIV (BCCfE-HIV), Canada**

Linda Akagi, Eirikka Brandson, Eric Druyts, Kim Fernandes Nada Gataric, P Richard Harrigan, Marianne Harris, Anna Hayden, Robert Hogg, Viviane Lima, Julio Montaner, David Moore, Evan Wood, Benita Yip, and Wen Zhang.

**Royal Free Hospital Cohort, London UK**

Clinical: S Bhagani, P Byrne, A Carroll, Z Cuthbertson, A Dunleavy, AM Geretti, B. Heelan, M Johnson, S Kinloch-de Loes, M Lipman, S Madge, N Marshall, D Nair, G Nebbia, B Prinz, L Swaden, M Tyrer, M Youle. Data management: C Chaloner, H Grabowska, J Holloway, J Puradiredja, D Ransom, R Tsintas. Biostatistics/Epidemiology: W Bannister, L Bansi, A Cozzi-Lepri, Z Fox, E Harris, T Hill, F Lampe, R Lodwick, A Mocroft, A Phillips, J Reekie, C Sabin, C Smith. Laboratory: E Amoah, C. Booth, G Clewley, A Garcia Diaz, B Gregory, W Labbett, F Tahami, M Thomas.

**South Alberta Clinic, Canada**

John Gill, Ron Read, Hartmut Krentz, Brenda Beckthold

**Köln / Bonn Cohort, Germany**

Gerd Fätkenheuer, Jürgen Rockstroh

**PISCIS, Catalonia and Balearic islands, Spain****Coordinators**

J. Casabona (CEEISCAT, CIBER Epidemiología y Salud Pública, CIBERESP, Spain) y JM. Miró (Hospital Clínic-Idibaps, Universitat de Barcelona).

**Field coordinator**

A. Alquézar (CEEISCAT, CIBER Epidemiología y Salud Pública, CIBERESP, Spain).

**Steering committee**

J. Casabona, A. Esteve, A. Alquézar (CEEISCAT, CIBER Epidemiología y Salud Pública, CIBERESP, Spain); JM. Miró (Hospital Clínic-Idibaps, Universitat de Barcelona); D. Podzamczar (Hospital de Bellvitge de Barcelona); J. Murillas (Hospital Son Dureta de Mallorca).

**Scientific committee**

A. Romero y C. Agustí (CEEISCAT, CIBER Epidemiología y Salud Pública, CIBERESP, Spain); JM Gatell, F. Agüero (Hospital Clínic-Idibaps, Universitat de Barcelona); C. Tural, B. Clotet (Hospital Universitari Germans Trias i Pujol, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona); E. Ferrer (Hospital de Bellvitge de Barcelona); M. Riera (Hospital Son Dureta de Mallorca) F. Segura G. Navarro (Corporació Parc Taulí de Sabadell); L. Force (Hospital de Mataró ); J. Vilaró (Hospital de Vic); A. Masabeu (Hospital de Palamós); I García (Hospital General d' Hospitalet); M. Guadarrama (Hospital Alt Penedès de Vilafranca).

**Data Management and statistical analysis**

A. Esteve, A. Montoliu y N. Ortega (CEEISCAT, CIBER Epidemiología y Salud Pública, CIBERESP, Spain), E. Lazzari (Hospital Clínic- Idibaps, Universitat de Barcelona).

### **Technical support**

E. Puchol, (CEEISCAT, CIBER Epidemiología y Salud Pública, CIBERESP, Spain); M. Sanchez (Hospital Clínic- Idibaps, Universitat de Barcelona).

### **Clinicians**

JL Blanco, F. Garcia-Alcaide, E. Martinez, J. Mallolas M. López-Dieguez, JF García-Goez, (Hospital Clínic- Idibaps, Universitat de Barcelona); G. Sirera, J. Romeu, , A. Jou. E. Negredo, C. Miranda, MC Capitan ( Hospital Universitari Germans Trias i Pujol, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona); M. Olmo, P. Barragan, M. Saumoy, F. Bolao, C. Cabellos, C. Peña. (Hospital Universitari de Bellvitge, L'Hospitalet, Barcelona), M. Sala, M. Cervantes, M Jose Amengual, M. Navarro y E Penelo (Corporació Sanitària Parc Taulí), P. Barrufet ( Hospital de Mataró ); M. Guadarrama (Hospital Alt Penedès de Vilafranca)

## **1917 Clinic Cohort, University of Alabama, Birmingham US**

### **Steering Committee**

Michael S. Saag, Michael J. Mugavero, James H. Willig, James L. Raper, Jeroan J. Allison, Mirjam-Colette Kempf, Joseph E. Schumacher, Andrew O. Westfall

### **Faculty Investigators**

Hui-Yi Lin, Maria Pisu, Linda Moneyham, David Vance, Laura Bachmann, Susan L Davies, Eta Berner, Edward Acosta, Jennifer King, Richard A. Kaslow

### **Research Support Team**

Karen Savage, Christa Nevin, Frances B. Walton, Malcolm L. Marler, Sarah Lawrence, Barbara Files-Kennedy, D. Scott Batey

### **Informatics Team**

Manoj A. Patil, Ujvala Patil, Mohit Varshney, Eugene Gibson, Alfredo Guzman, Dustin Rinehart

## **Veterans Aging Cohort Study (VACS), Connecticut, US**

**PI and Co-PI:** AC Justice, DA Fiellin. **Scientific Officer (NIAAA):** K Bryant

Data included represents entire VA national network

### **Core Faculty**

K Mattocks (Deputy Director), S Braithwaite, C Brandt, R Cook, J Conigliaro, K Crothers, J Chang, S Crystal, N Day, J Erdos, M Freiberg, M Kozal, M Gaziano, M Gerschenson, B Good, A Gordon, J Goulet, K Kraemer, J Lim, S Maisto, P Miller, P O'Connor, R Papas, C Rinaldo, M Roberts, J Samet

### **Validation sites**

Atlanta (D. Rimland, C Jones-Taylor), Baltimore (KA Oursler, R Titanji), Bronx (S Brown, S Garrison), Houston (M Rodriguez-Barradas, N Masozera), Los Angeles (M Goetz, D Leaf), Manhattan-Brooklyn (M Simberkoff, D Blumenthal, J Leung), Pittsburgh (A Butt, E Hoffman), and Washington DC (C Gibert, R Peck)

### **Staff**

D Cohen, A Consorte, K Gordon, F Kidwai, F Levin, K McGinnis, M Rambo, J Rogers, M Skanderson, F Whitsett

**Funded by**

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (2U10 AA 13566); National Institute on Aging (K23 G00826); Robert Wood Johnson Generalist Faculty Scholar Award; an Inter-Agency Agreement between National Institute on Aging, National Institute of Mental Health, and the Veterans Health Administration; the VHA Office of Research and Development; and, VHA Public Health Strategic Health Care Group.

**The Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study (MACS)**

Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health: Joseph B. Margolick (Principal Investigator), Haroutune Armenian, Barbara Crain, Adrian Dobs, Homayoon Farzadegan, Joel Gallant, John Hylton, Lisette Johnson, Shenghan Lai, Ned Sacktor, Ola Selnes, James Shepard, Chloe Thio. Chicago: Howard Brown Health Center, Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University, and Cook County Bureau of Health Services: John P. Phair (Principal Investigator), Joan S. Chmiel (Co-Principal Investigator), Sheila Badri, Bruce Cohen, Craig Conover, Maurice O'Gorman, David Ostrow, Frank Palella, Daina Variakojis, Steven M. Wolinsky. Los Angeles: University of California, UCLA Schools of Public Health and Medicine: Roger Detels (Principal Investigator), Barbara R. Visscher (Co-Principal Investigator), Aaron Aronow, Robert Bolan, Elizabeth Breen, Anthony Butch, Thomas Coates, Rita Effros, John Fahey, Beth Jamieson, Otoniel Martínez-Maza, Eric N. Miller, John Oishi, Paul Satz, Harry Vinters, Dorothy Wiley, Mallory Witt, Otto Yang, Stephen Young, Zuo Feng Zhang. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, Graduate School of Public Health: Charles R. Rinaldo (Principal Investigator), Lawrence Kingsley (Co-Principal Investigator), James T. Becker, Robert W. Evans, John Mellors, Sharon Riddler, Anthony Silvestre. Data Coordinating Center: The Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health: Lisa P. Jacobson (Principal Investigator), Alvaro Muñoz (Co-Principal Investigator), Stephen R. Cole, Christopher Cox, Gypsyamber D'Souza, Stephen J. Gange, Janet Schollenberger, Eric C. Seaberg, Sol Su. NIH: National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases: Robin E. Huebner; National Cancer Institute: Geraldina Dominguez; National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute: Cheryl McDonald. UO1-AI-35042, 5-MO1-RR-00722 (GCRC), UO1-AI-35043, UO1-AI-37984, UO1-AI-35039, UO1-AI-35040, UO1-AI-37613, UO1-AI-35041. Website located at <http://www.statepi.jhsph.edu/macs/macs.html>.

**Amsterdam Cohort Studies**

Maria Prins and Hanneke Scchuitemaker for the Amsterdam Cohort Studies on HIV infection and AIDS, a collaboration between the Health Service of Amsterdam, the Academic Medical Center of the University of Amsterdam, Sanquin Blood Supply Foundation and the University Medical Center Utrecht, are part of the Netherlands HIV Monitoring Foundation and financially supported by the Netherlands National Institute for Public Health and the Environment. Website: <http://www.amsterdamcohortstudies.org/>

**CASCADE collaboration**

**Steering Committee:** Julia Del Amo (Chair), Laurence Meyer (Vice Chair), Heiner C. Bucher, Geneviève Chêne, Deenan Pillay, Maria Prins, Magda Rosinska, Caroline Sabin, Giota Touloumi

**Co-ordinating Centre:** Kholoud Porter (Project Leader), Sara Lodi, Sarah Walker, Abdel Babiker, Janet Darbyshire

**Clinical Advisory Board:** Heiner Bucher, Andrea de Luca, Martin Fisher, Roberto Muga  
Collaborators: Australia Sydney AIDS Prospective Study and Sydney Primary HIV Infection cohort (John Kaldor, Tony Kelleher, Tim Ramacciotti, Linda Gelgor, David Cooper, Don Smith); Canada South Alberta clinic (John Gill); Denmark Copenhagen HIV Seroconverter Cohort (Louise Bruun Jørgensen, Claus Nielsen, Court Pedersen); Estonia Tartu Ülikool (Irja Lutsar); France Aquitaine cohort (Geneviève Chêne, Francois Dabis, Rodolphe Thiebaut, Bernard Masquelier), French Hospital Database (Dominique Costagliola, Marguerite Guiguet), Lyon Primary Infection cohort (Philippe Vanhems), SEROCO cohort (Laurence Meyer, Faroudy Boufassa); Germany German cohort (Osamah Hamouda, Claudia Kucherer); Greece Greek Haemophilia cohort (Giota Touloumi, Nikos Pantazis, Angelos Hatzakis, Dimitrios Paraskevis, Anastasia Karafoulidou); Italy Italian Seroconversion Study (Giovanni Rezza, Maria Dorrucchi, Benedetta Longo, Claudia Balotta); Netherlands Amsterdam Cohort Studies among homosexual men and drug users (Maria Prins, Liselotte van Asten, Akke van der Bij, Ronald Geskus, Roel Coutinho); Norway Oslo and Ulleval Hospital cohorts (Mette Sannes, Oddbjorn Brubakk, Anne Eskild, Johan N Bruun); Poland National Institute of Hygiene (Magdalena Rosinska); Portugal Universidade Nova de Lisboa (Ricardo Camacho); Russia Pasteur Institute (Tatyana Smolskaya); Spain Badalona IDU hospital cohort (Roberto Muga, Jordi Tor), Barcelona IDU Cohort (Patricia Garcia de Olalla, Joan Cayla), Madrid cohort (Julia Del Amo, Jorge del Romero), Valencia IDU cohort (Santiago Pérez-Hoyos, Ildefonso Hernandez Aguado); Switzerland Swiss HIV Cohort Study (Heiner C. Bucher, Martin Rickenbach, Patrick Francioli); Ukraine Perinatal Prevention of AIDS Initiative (Ruslan Malyuta); United Kingdom Edinburgh Hospital cohort (Ray Brettle), Health Protection Agency (Valerie Delpuch, Sam Lattimore, Gary Murphy, John Parry, Noel Gill), Royal Free haemophilia cohort (Caroline Sabin, Christine Lee), UK Register of HIV Seroconverters (Kholoud Porter, Anne Johnson, Andrew Phillips, Abdel Babiker, Janet Darbyshire, Valerie Delpuch), University College London (Deenan Pillay), University of Oxford (Harold Jaffe).

Table 1. Characteristics at baseline and events recorded during follow up of patients followed up in the pre-cART era and after starting cART. Baseline is date of start of follow up in the pre-cART era, and date of initiation of cART, for patients on cART.

	Pre-cART era	On cART
No. of patients	21247	24444
Baseline characteristics		
Median age in years (IQR)	34 (28-41)	37 (31-45)
Females (%)	4813 (23%)	7154 (29%)
Median CD4 cell count (IQR)	354 (264-448)	230 (130-330)
Median log <sub>10</sub> HIV-1 RNA (IQR)	Not available	4.9 (4.4-5.3)
Transmission group (%)*		
Heterosexual sex	6961 (33%)	11382 (51%)
Men who have sex with men	11874 (56%)	8483 (38%)
Other / unknown	2412 (11%)	2485 (12%)
Calendar periods of enrolment (%)		
1989-1990	5784 (27%)	
1991-1992	6586 (31%)	
1993-1995	8877 (42%)	
1998-1999		7000 (29%)
2000-2002		9490 (39%)
2003-2006		7954 (33%)
Initial cART regimen (%)		
	Not applicable	
PI-based triple regimen <sup>§</sup>		11644 (48%)
NNRTI-based triple regimen <sup>§</sup>		8696 (36%)
NRTI only		2347 (10%)
Other <sup>#</sup>		1757 (6%)
AIDS and death during follow up		
Total follow up (years)	68253	81071
Median years of follow up (IQR)	3.1 (1.9-4.5)	3.2 (1.5-5.3)
Number developing AIDS (%)	5356 (25.2%)	1860 (7.6%)
Number of deaths (%)	3630 (17.1%)	808 (3.3%)
Number with AIDS or death (%)	5893 (27.7%)	2366 (9.7%)

\* Excluding 2064 patients from the VACS cohort, in whom transmission group was classified only as IDU or other

§ PI: protease inhibitor; NNRTI: non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor; NRTI: nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor

# Non-standard regimen consisting of more than one PI and/or NNRTI, or more than three drugs (excluding ritonavir-boosting of PIs)

Table 2 - Hazard ratios for AIDS or death, (naïve, and adjusted for lead times and unseen AIDS and death events), comparing deferring cART to a lower CD4 range with starting in a higher CD4 range.

CD4 ranges have widths of 100 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, in increments of 25 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>.

Higher CD4 range	Lower CD4 range	Pre-cART data			On cART data			Hazard ratio (95% CI) for AIDS or death	
		No. of patients in higher CD4 range	Estimated median lead time* (years)	Estimated % (95% CI) progressing to AIDS/death before upper threshold of lower CD4 range	No. of patients	No. of AIDS/death events	Estimated no. of unseen events	Naïve	Adjusted for lead times and unseen events
451-550	351-450	5015	0.67	1.6 (1.1 to 2.1)	5047	260	53	1.04 (0.81 to 1.34)	0.99 (0.76 to 1.29)
426-525	326-425	5792	0.77	2.3 (1.7 to 2.9)	5898	314	91	1.12 (0.89 to 1.42)	1.12 (0.87 to 1.43)
401-500	301-400	6536	0.80	2.7 (2.0 to 3.4)	6874	366	126	1.04 (0.84 to 1.29)	1.09 (0.85 to 1.38)
376-475	276-375	7029	0.84	2.8 (2.2 to 3.5)	7926	400	151	1.11 (0.91 to 1.37)	1.19 (0.96 to 1.47)
351-450	251-350	7433	0.84	3.2 (2.5 to 3.9)	8989	472	189	1.17 (0.97 to 1.41)	1.28 (1.04 to 1.57)
326-425	226-325	7775	0.86	3.3 (2.7 to 3.8)	10067	530	208	1.08 (0.90 to 1.28)	1.21 (1.01 to 1.46)
301-400	201-300	8226	0.89	3.8 (3.1 to 4.5)	10980	584	258	1.15 (0.98 to 1.36)	1.34 (1.12 to 1.61)
276-375	176-275	8519	0.91	5.3 (4.3 to 6.3)	11775	640	366	1.23 (1.05 to 1.44)	1.59 (1.30 to 1.95)
251-350	151-250	8748	0.92	6.1 (5.2 to 7.0)	12104	719	412	1.30 (1.12 to 1.51)	1.71 (1.43 to 2.04)
226-325	126-225	8788	0.91	7.0 (6.2 to 7.8)	12206	763	452	1.47 (1.27 to 1.70)	2.01 (1.73 to 2.35)
201-300	101-200	8878	0.92	8.1 (7.2 to 9.1)	11976	822	485	1.59 (1.38 to 1.82)	2.21 (1.91 to 2.56)
176-275	76-175	8282	0.90	9.5 (8.6 to 10.4)	11534	908	523	1.82 (1.60 to 2.08)	2.61 (2.27 to 3.00)
151-250	51-150	7484	0.95	10.8 (9.9 to 11.7)	10926	957	549	1.76 (1.55 to 2.01)	2.59 (2.29 to 2.92)
126-225	26-125	6742	0.95	13.1 (12.1 to 14.1)	10276	1088	642	2.01 (1.78 to 2.27)	2.88 (2.56 to 3.25)
101-200	0-100	5871	0.92	17.6 (16.3 to 18.9)	10014	1332	969	2.25 (2.01 to 2.51)	3.35 (2.99 to 3.75)

\* Time from first CD4 measurement in upper range to upper threshold of lower CD4 range, AIDS or death

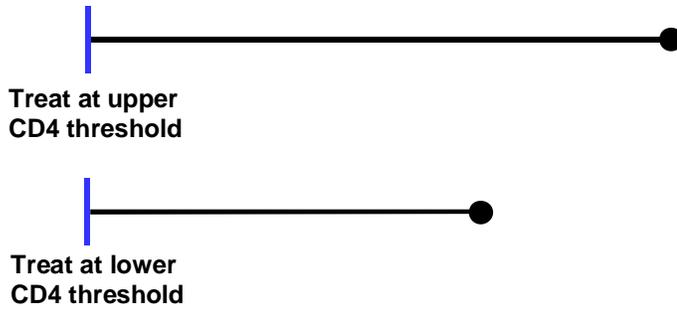
Table 3 - Hazard ratios for death (naïve, and adjusted for lead times and unseen deaths), comparing deferring cART to a lower CD4 range with starting in a higher CD4 range. CD4 ranges have widths of 100 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, in increments of 25 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>.

Higher CD4 range	Lower CD4 range	Pre-cART data			On cART data			Mortality hazard ratio (95% CI)	
		No. of patients in higher CD4 range	Estimated median lead time* (years)	Estimated % (95% CI) progressing to death before upper threshold of lower CD4 range	No. of patients	No. of deaths	Estimated no. of unseen deaths	Naïve	Adjusted for lead times and unseen deaths
451-550	351-450	5015	0.66	0.5 (0.3 to 0.7)	5053	92	15	1.06 (0.69 to 1.62)	0.93 (0.60 to 1.44)
426-525	326-425	5792	0.77	0.6 (0.3 to 1.0)	5910	108	26	1.03 (0.69 to 1.52)	0.96 (0.63 to 1.46)
401-500	301-400	6536	0.81	0.7 (0.4 to 0.9)	6887	129	29	1.15 (0.80 to 1.65)	1.01 (0.68 to 1.50)
376-475	276-375	7029	0.84	0.6 (0.4 to 0.9)	7943	149	30	1.20 (0.86 to 1.69)	0.99 (0.68 to 1.43)
351-450	251-350	7433	0.84	0.7 (0.4 to 1.1)	9013	183	41	1.38 (1.01 to 1.88)	1.13 (0.80 to 1.60)
326-425	226-325	7775	0.88	0.8 (0.5 to 1.1)	10099	208	48	1.43 (1.07 to 1.91)	1.24 (0.92 to 1.67)
301-400	201-300	8226	0.87	1.0 (0.2 to 1.8)	11021	239	67	1.43 (1.10 to 1.86)	1.25 (0.86 to 1.82)
276-375	176-275	8519	0.89	1.1 (0.8 to 1.5)	11825	264	72	1.43 (1.12 to 1.84)	1.32 (0.98 to 1.78)
251-350	151-250	8748	0.92	1.4 (0.8 to 2.0)	12159	294	90	1.32 (1.04 to 1.66)	1.23 (0.90 to 1.69)
226-325	126-225	8788	0.90	1.5 (0.9 to 2.1)	12269	324	93	1.41 (1.13 to 1.76)	1.34 (1.01 to 1.77)
201-300	101-200	8878	0.92	1.6 (1.1 to 2.0)	12051	348	84	1.44 (1.16 to 1.78)	1.34 (1.05 to 1.71)
176-275	76-175	8282	0.91	1.8 (1.6 to 2.1)	11626	362	91	1.48 (1.21 to 1.82)	1.51 (1.21 to 1.87)
151-250	51-150	7484	0.93	2.2 (1.8 to 2.6)	11044	369	104	1.48 (1.21 to 1.82)	1.61 (1.29 to 2.01)
126-225	26-125	6742	0.92	2.7 (2.2 to 3.1)	10432	417	125	1.58 (1.30 to 1.91)	1.75 (1.43 to 2.15)
101-200	0-100	5871	0.89	3.7 (3.0 to 4.4)	10248	500	184	1.73 (1.45 to 2.08)	2.04 (1.7 to 2.46)

\* Time from first CD4 measurement in upper range to upper threshold of lower CD4 range, AIDS or death

Figure 1 - Comparison of analyses from initiation of treatment (upper panel a) and from the time at which the upper CD4 threshold is reached (lower panel b).

**(a) Analysis from initiation of treatment**



**(b) Analysis from the time the upper CD4 threshold is reached**

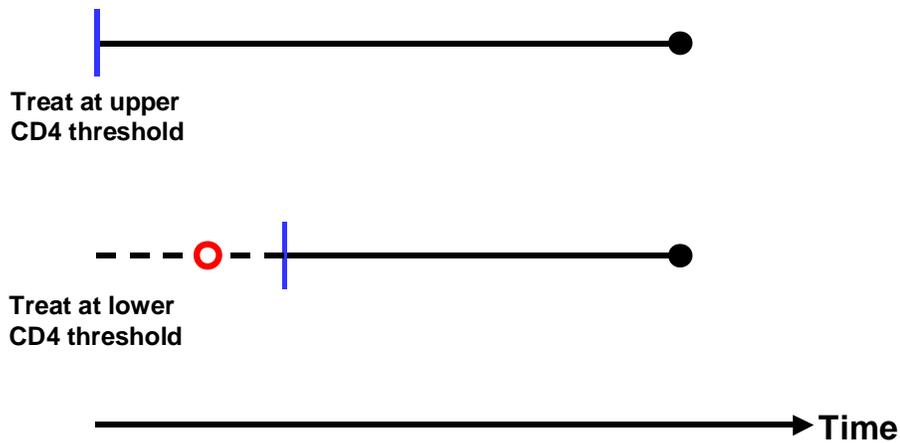
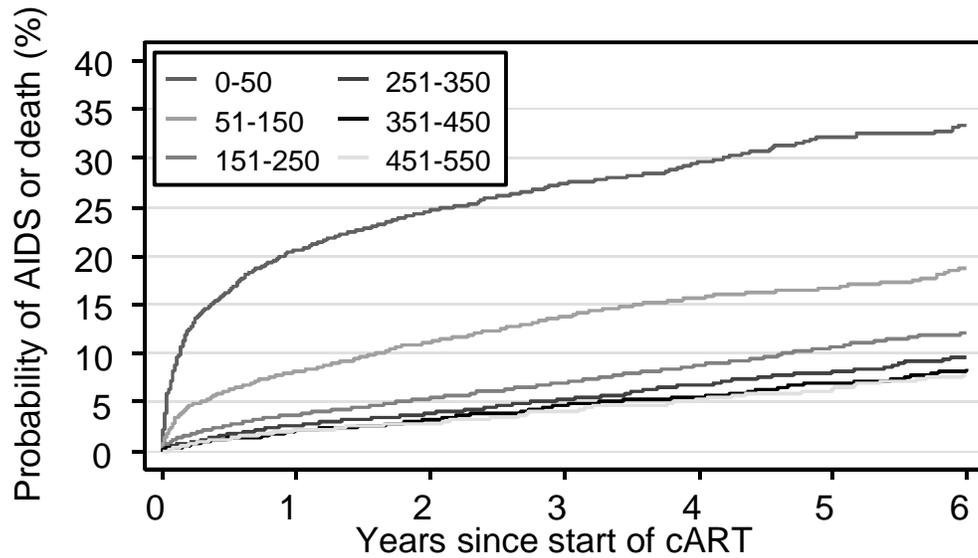
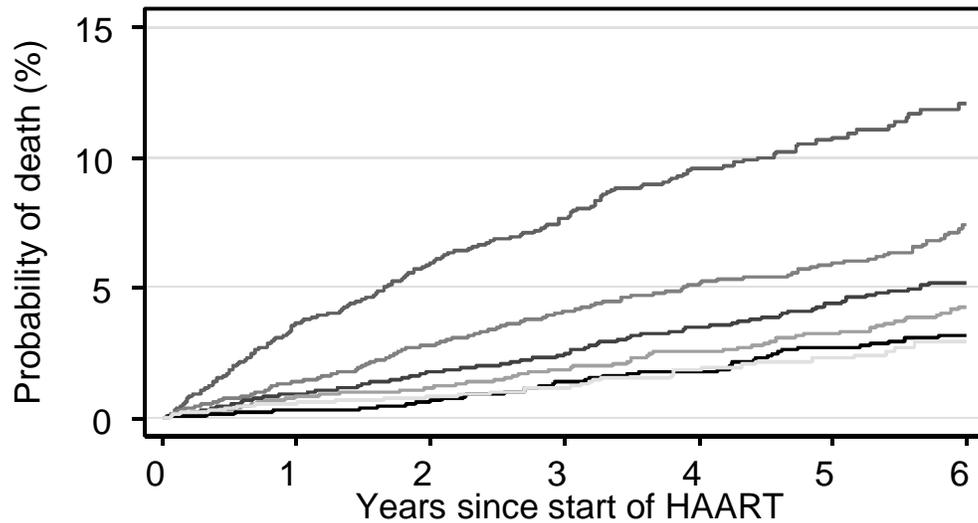


Figure 2 - Cumulative probabilities of AIDS or death (upper panel) or death (lower panel) after starting cART, according to range of CD4 count at the time of starting cART.



Number at risk

CD4 = 0-50	2594	1800	1417	1091	784	512	300
CD4 = 51-150	4638	3607	2875	2184	1570	1038	597
CD4 = 151-250	6406	4963	3763	2766	1957	1279	763
CD4 = 251-350	5753	4565	3570	2760	2058	1444	861
CD4 = 351-450	3260	2719	2315	1855	1492	1095	681
CD4 = 451-550	1793	1529	1326	1108	899	684	437



Number at risk

CD4 = 0-50	2594	2230	1842	1465	1077	728	419
CD4 = 51-150	4638	3919	3215	2516	1856	1227	718
CD4 = 151-250	6406	5177	4029	3005	2163	1439	860
CD4 = 251-350	5753	4707	3756	2947	2238	1576	943
CD4 = 351-450	3260	2793	2413	1965	1604	1188	740
CD4 = 451-550	1793	1576	1384	1182	976	744	479

Figure 3 – Adjusted hazard ratios and 95% confidence intervals for AIDS or death (upper panel) and death alone (lower panel), comparing the effects of deferring cART to a 100 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> lower CD4 threshold with initiation at the higher threshold. The horizontal axis shows the upper limits of the CD4 cell count ranges in the lower threshold groups (from 351 to 450 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, in steps of 25 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, to 0 to 100 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>). The adjusted hazard ratios and confidence intervals are detailed in Table 2.

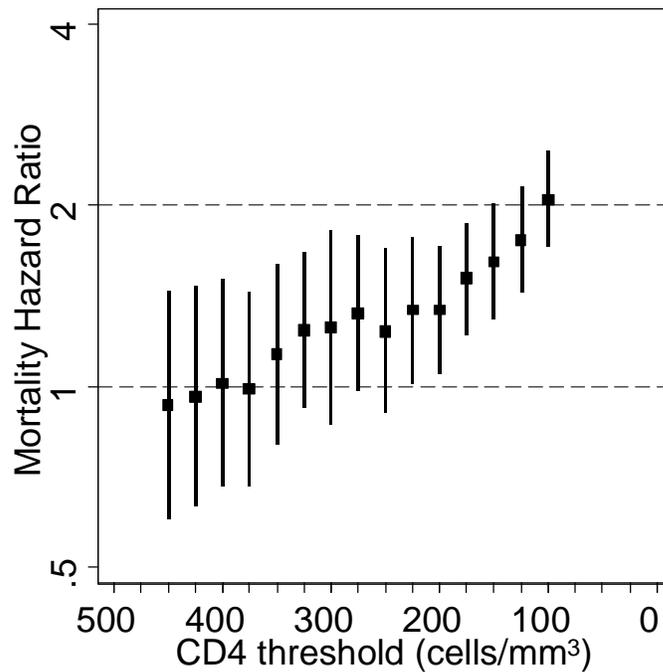
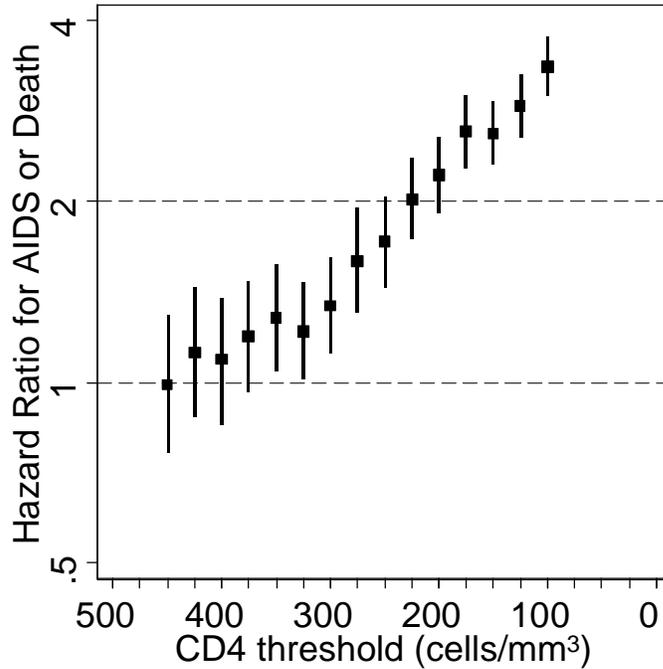
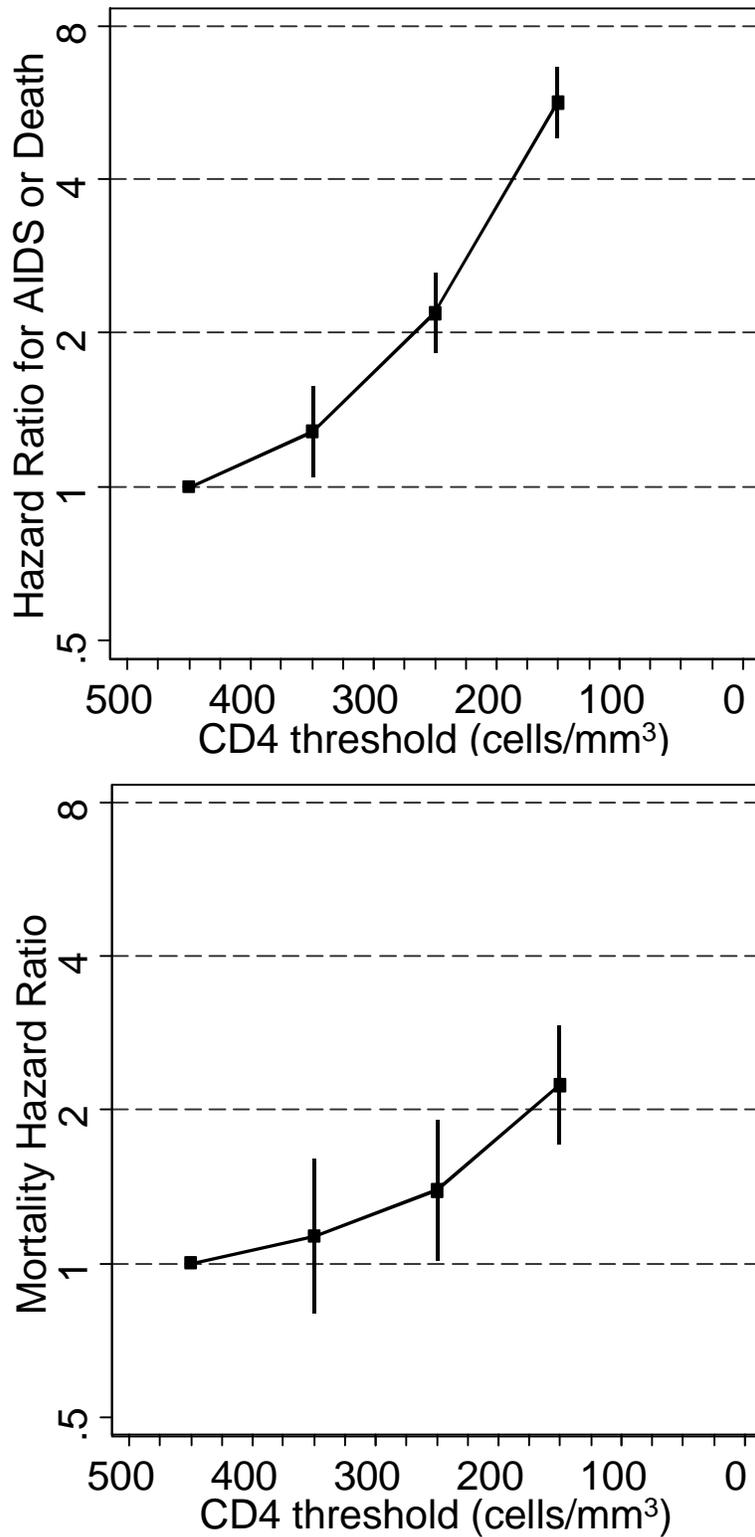


Figure 4 - Hazard ratios and 95% confidence intervals for the cumulative effect of delayed initiation of cART for the combined endpoint AIDS or death (upper panel) and death alone (lower panel). The horizontal axis shows the upper limits of the CD4 cell count ranges compared: 351-450 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> (reference), 251-350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, 151-250 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> and 51-150 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>.



## Web appendix - Methods used to adjust for lead times and unseen AIDS and death events

Analyses were based on the 21247 adult HIV-infected patients followed during the pre-cART era. [Appendix Table 1](#) shows characteristics of these patients according to contributing cohort. The majority of the patients (14286, 67%) were included in the French Hospital Database on HIV. Participants in the Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study and Amsterdam Cohort were restricted to men who have sex with men. The median of the first CD4 count below 550 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> was lower in the Swiss HIV Cohort than in other cohorts, indicating that patients in that study tended to be diagnosed later in the course of their disease.

For each CD4 range corresponding to a deferred initiation group, we fitted a mixture of two generalized gamma survival distributions<sup>70</sup> to simultaneously model the distribution of times from the first CD4 measurement in the upper CD4 range to the upper threshold of the lower CD4 range (i.e., lead-time) and the probability of progression to AIDS or death before reaching the upper threshold of the lower CD4 range. Patients who were censored were redistributed to the two groups (i.e., those who progressed to AIDS or death or who reached the upper threshold of the lower CD4 range) according to the proportion of uncensored patients in each group. We repeated all comparisons using death alone as the endpoint. Patients in the pre-cART dataset were considered to have become eligible for immediate treatment if they progressed to AIDS. AIDS events occurring within two weeks of the upper threshold of the lower CD4 range, and deaths occurring within two weeks of AIDS, were included as endpoints on the basis that they would not have been averted by initiation of cART. The fit of the generalized gamma distributions was checked visually by comparisons with non-parametric distributions.

For each comparison of a lower (deferred initiation) with an upper (immediate initiation) CD4 range imputation, we created 25 completed datasets based on the fitted generalized gamma distributions, in which lead-time and unseen AIDS and death events were added to the data for individuals in the deferred initiation group in the on-cART data. We analyzed each completed dataset using Cox regression to estimate hazard ratios comparing deferred with immediate initiation of cART. Finally, estimated hazard ratios from the 25 completed datasets were combined using a standard formula for the combination of multiple imputed datasets.<sup>37</sup>

[Appendix Figure 1](#) shows examples of non-parametric and parametric estimates of the distributions of time to progression to AIDS before crossing the upper threshold of the lower CD4 range and to crossing the upper threshold of the lower CD4 range in the absence of cART,

for the ranges 151-250 and 351-450 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>. The rate of progression to AIDS before reaching the upper threshold of the lower CD4 range was greater for the lower CD4 range (AIDS before declining below 150 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>) than for the higher range (AIDS before declining below 350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>). In the lower CD4 range, the generalized gamma mixture model appeared to somewhat underestimate the rate of progression to AIDS and death before crossing the upper threshold of the lower CD4 range, mainly due to underestimation of the number of events very soon after the first CD4 measurement in the upper range (“fast progressors”). Any bias due to underestimation of the number of fast progressors would likely be conservative because the absence of these rapid events in the deferred arm would raise the resultant survival curve to be closer to the immediate treatment arm. The fit was notably better in higher CD4 ranges. Lack of fit at lower CD4 ranges is also unlikely to be important because benefits of early initiation are clear both in the current paper and based on existing randomized evidence.<sup>3</sup>

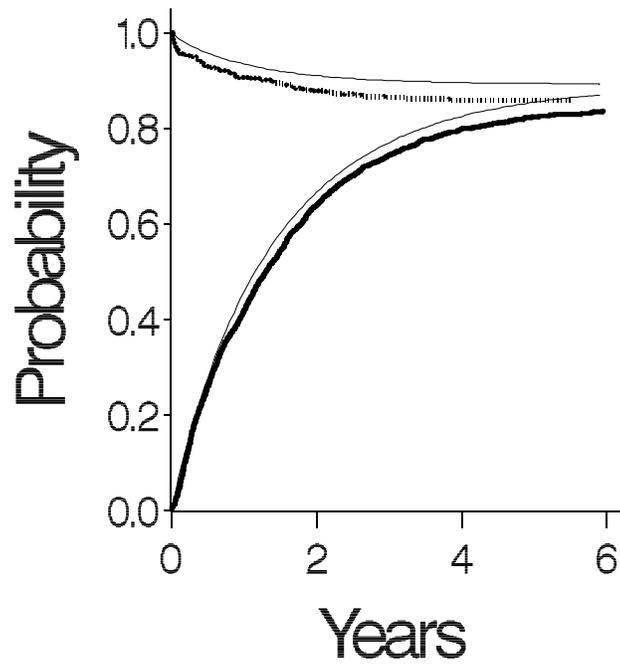
Appendix Table 1: Characteristics of 21,247 patients included in analyses in pre-cART cohorts.

Cohort	Number (%) of patients	Number (%) male	Presumed mode of transmission			Median (IQR) first CD4 <550 cells/mm <sup>3</sup>	Total years follow up	Number of AIDS events	Number of deaths	Number of patients with AIDS or death
			MSM*	Het*	Other					
Swiss HIV Cohort Study	2059 (10)	1572 (76)	1134 (55)	828 (40)	97 (5)	342 (230-448)	7447	747	544	807
Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study	1324 (6)	1324 (100)	1324 (100)	0	0	387 (284-474)	5863	639	496	669
French Hospital Database on HIV	14286 (67)	10522 (74)	7044 (49)	5385 (38)	1857 (13)	347 (261-439)	41620	2873	1825	3231
Aquitaine Cohort	1238 (6)	907 (73)	579 (47)	431 (35)	228 (18)	350 (268-438)	4495	344	247	377
South Alberta Cohort	410 (2)	383 (93)	355 (87)	41 (10)	14 (3)	378 (280-465)	1598	133	85	135
Amsterdam Cohort	342 (2)	342 (100)	342 (100)	0	0	400 (310-490)	1575	140	109	150
CASCADE	1588 (7)	1386 (87)	1096 (69)	276 (17)	216 (14)	400 (298-475)	5653	480	324	524
Total	21247	16436 (77)	11874 (56)	6961 (33)	2412 (11)	354 (264-448)	68253	5356	3630	5893

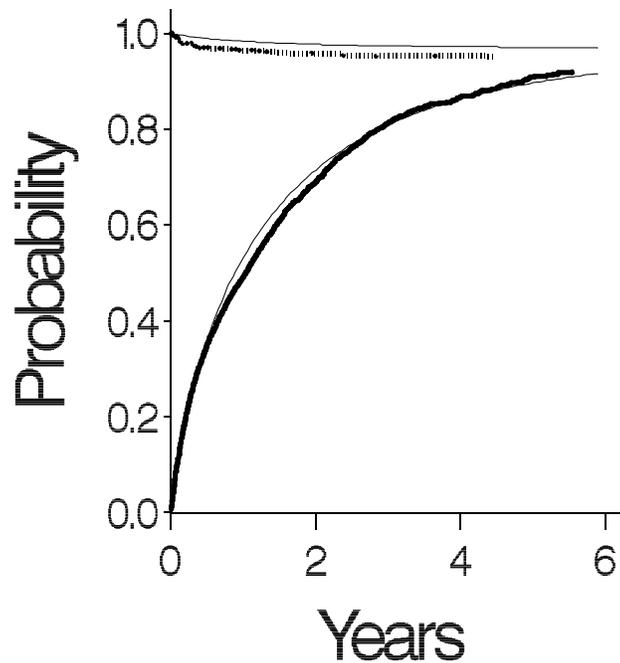
\* MSM: Men who have sex with men; Het: Heterosexual sex

Appendix Figure 1: Fitted parametric estimates (thin solid lines) and non-parametric estimates (dotted line and heavy line) of cumulative proportions free of AIDS before reaching the lower CD4 threshold (upper curves) and the cumulative proportion crossing the lower CD4 threshold without AIDS diagnosis (lower curve) for (i) the range 151-250 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> and (ii) the range 351-450 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>.

(i)



(ii)



Web table 1: Estimated incidence rate ratios comparing the later (1992-95) with earlier (1989-91) years the pre-cART data, after adjusting for age at start of follow up, sex and risk group (MSM/other).

CD4 range	Incidence rate ratio (95% CI)	
	AIDS or death	Death
351 - 450	1.30 (0.73,2.30)	0.99 (0.39,2.50)
251 - 350	1.01 (0.72,1.41)	0.81 (0.40,1.63)
151 - 250	1.28(1.01,1.64)	0.93 (0.57,1.53)
51 - 150	1.05 (0.88,1.26)	1.45 (0.93,2.25)
0 - 50	1.02 (0.86,1.20)	1.06 (0.70,1.62)

Web table 2: Estimated hazard ratios comparing progression rates from the time of starting cART (naïve hazard ratios), after adjusting for age at initiation, sex and risk group (MSM/other).

Lower CD4 range	Higher CD4 range	Adjusted hazard ratio (95% CI) for AIDS or death	Adjusted mortality hazard ratio (95% CI)
351-450	451-550	1.04 (0.81 to 1.34)	1.04 (0.68 to 1.59)
326-425	426-525	1.07 (0.85 to 1.35)	0.96 (0.65 to 1.43)
301-400	401-500	1.04 (0.84 to 1.29)	0.98 (0.66 to 1.45)
276-375	376-475	1.12 (0.92 to 1.37)	0.99 (0.68 to 1.44)
251-350	351-450	1.16 (0.96 to 1.39)	1.08 (0.76 to 1.53)
226-325	326-425	1.06 (0.89 to 1.25)	1.13 (0.83 to 1.53)
201-300	301-400	1.16 (0.98 to 1.36)	1.09 (0.82 to 1.45)
176-275	276-375	1.24 (1.07 to 1.45)	1.15 (0.80 to 1.67)
151-250	251-350	1.30 (1.13 to 1.50)	1.07 (0.82 to 1.40)
126-225	226-325	1.47 (1.28 to 1.69)	1.17 (0.89 to 1.53)
101-200	201-300	1.54 (1.35 to 1.76)	1.25 (0.97 to 1.59)
76-175	176-275	1.76 (1.55 to 2.00)	1.32 (1.07 to 1.64)
51-150	151-250	1.77 (1.57 to 2.00)	1.47 (1.19 to 1.82)
26-125	126-225	2.07 (1.85 to 2.32)	1.50 (1.23 to 1.83)
0-100	101-200	2.41 (2.17 to 2.68)	1.81 (1.47 to 2.23)

Web table 3. Hazard ratios (adjusted for lead times and unseen AIDS and death events), split by follow up period (0-1.99 years and 2-6 years) and comparing deferring cART to a lower CD4 range with starting in a higher CD4 range. CD4 ranges have widths of 100 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, in increments of 25 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>.

Higher CD4 range	Lower CD4 range	AIDS or death		Death	
		Hazard ratio 0-1.99 years	Hazard ratio 2-6 years	Hazard ratio 0-1.99 years	Hazard ratio 2-6 years
451-550	351-450	0.97 (0.64,1.48)	0.99 (0.68,1.45)	0.87 (0.39,1.98)	0.97 (0.55,1.69)
426-525	326-425	1.06 (0.68,1.64)	1.17 (0.78,1.77)	1.12 (0.50,2.52)	0.83 (0.49,1.41)
401-500	301-400	1.15 (0.78,1.69)	1.00 (0.72,1.40)	1.60 (0.79,3.25)	0.77 (0.48,1.25)
376-475	276-375	1.30 (0.93,1.84)	1.05 (0.76,1.43)	1.97 (0.99,3.96)	0.69 (0.44,1.11)
351-450	251-350	1.42 (1.04,1.94)	1.11 (0.83,1.50)	1.94 (1.02,3.69)	0.87 (0.58,1.29)
326-425	226-325	1.41 (1.06,1.86)	1.02 (0.77,1.35)	1.73 (1.03,2.88)	0.98 (0.65,1.49)
301-400	201-300	1.55 (1.20,2.00)	1.14 (0.88,1.47)	1.41 (0.70,2.86)	1.03 (0.69,1.53)
276-375	176-275	1.90 (1.44,2.51)	1.29 (0.99,1.67)	1.61 (1.01,2.57)	1.13 (0.79,1.61)
251-350	151-250	1.86 (1.47,2.35)	1.52 (1.19,1.95)	1.44 (0.97,2.13)	1.06 (0.75,1.51)
226-325	126-225	2.38 (1.92,2.94)	1.63 (1.27,2.09)	1.64 (1.11,2.43)	1.08 (0.78,1.49)
201-300	101-200	2.56 (2.07,3.17)	1.77 (1.36,2.30)	1.62 (1.12,2.35)	1.13 (0.84,1.52)
176-275	76-175	2.92 (2.43,3.50)	2.01 (1.59,2.53)	1.78 (1.28,2.46)	1.28 (0.94,1.76)
151-250	51-150	2.90 (2.42,3.47)	2.00 (1.60,2.50)	1.79 (1.26,2.55)	1.42 (1.02,2.00)
126-225	26-125	3.33 (2.83,3.91)	2.26 (1.81,2.82)	1.82 (1.17,2.84)	1.54 (1.04,2.29)
101-200	0-100	3.55 (3.04,4.14)	2.89 (2.33,3.57)	2.19 (1.59,3.03)	1.88 (1.42,2.48)

Web table 4. Hazard ratios comparing deferring cART to a lower CD4 range with starting in a higher CD4 range, among patients with presumed transmission via IDU.

CD4 ranges have widths of 100 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, in increments of 25 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>.

Lower CD4 range	Higher CD4 range	Hazard ratio (95% CI) for AIDS or death		Hazard ratio (95% CI) for death	
		Naïve	Adjusted for lead times and unseen AIDS and death events	Naïve	Adjusted for lead times and unseen deaths
351-450	451-550	1.13 (0.72 to 1.75)	0.90 (0.56 to 1.46)	1.20 (0.64 to 2.26)	0.99 (0.48 to 2.00)
326-425	426-525	1.31 (0.88 to 1.95)	0.94 (0.57 to 1.53)	1.23 (0.70 to 2.16)	1.11 (0.60 to 2.05)
301-400	401-500	1.49 (1.03 to 2.17)	1.28 (0.86 to 1.90)	1.49 (0.88 to 2.54)	1.28 (0.69 to 2.39)
276-375	376-475	1.23 (0.88 to 1.74)	1.18 (0.82 to 1.71)	1.26 (0.77 to 2.04)	1.24 (0.68 to 2.26)
251-350	351-450	1.33 (0.97 to 1.83)	1.35 (0.97 to 1.89)	1.41 (0.90 to 2.20)	1.42 (0.87 to 2.31)
226-325	326-425	1.28 (0.96 to 1.71)	1.22 (0.86 to 1.73)	1.54 (1.03 to 2.31)	1.35 (0.87 to 2.08)
201-300	301-400	1.31 (1.00 to 1.72)	1.20 (0.88 to 1.64)	1.50 (1.04 to 2.19)	1.22 (0.81 to 1.85)
176-275	276-375	1.56 (1.20 to 2.02)	1.36 (1.01 to 1.84)	1.63 (1.13 to 2.34)	1.29 (0.87 to 1.91)
151-250	251-350	1.39 (1.08 to 1.78)	1.21 (0.93 to 1.59)	1.38 (0.98 to 1.94)	1.17 (0.80 to 1.72)
126-225	226-325	1.36 (1.07 to 1.73)	1.34 (1.05 to 1.71)	1.20 (0.86 to 1.67)	0.91 (0.54 to 1.53)
101-200	201-300	1.25 (0.99 to 1.57)	1.31 (1.00 to 1.72)	1.10 (0.80 to 1.52)	1.05 (0.73 to 1.52)
76-175	176-275	1.14 (0.91 to 1.43)	1.25 (0.99 to 1.58)	1.11 (0.81 to 1.52)	1.07 (0.78 to 1.49)
51-150	151-250	1.21 (0.97 to 1.52)	1.28 (0.93 to 1.74)	1.13 (0.83 to 1.55)	1.16 (0.84 to 1.60)
26-125	126-225	1.29 (1.04 to 1.61)	1.62 (1.30 to 2.02)	1.21 (0.89 to 1.66)	1.29 (0.91 to 1.83)
0-100	101-200	1.49 (1.20 to 1.84)	2.00 (1.61 to 2.49)	1.32 (0.98 to 1.79)	1.54 (1.13 to 2.11)

Web Table 5. Hazard ratios for AIDS or death, (naïve, and adjusted for lead times and unseen AIDS and death events), comparing deferring cART to a lower CD4 range with starting in a higher CD4 range, restricted to four cohorts that provided both pre-cART and on-cART data.

Lower CD4 range	Higher CD4 range	Hazard ratio (95% CI) for AIDS or death	
		Naïve	Adjusted for lead times and unseen AIDS and death events
351-450	451-550	1.00 (0.66,1.52)	0.93 (0.59,1.47)
326-425	426-525	1.09 (0.74,1.59)	1.10 (0.72,1.66)
301-400	401-500	1.11 (0.79,1.56)	1.18 (0.81,1.72)
276-375	376-475	1.22 (0.88,1.69)	1.33 (0.94,1.88)
251-350	351-450	1.33 (0.98,1.79)	1.46 (1.02,2.08)
226-325	326-425	1.26 (0.95,1.66)	1.42 (1.07,1.89)
201-300	301-400	1.11 (0.85,1.43)	1.37 (1.06,1.78)
176-275	276-375	1.15 (0.90,1.46)	1.64 (1.27,2.13)
151-250	251-350	1.20 (0.96,1.51)	1.76 (1.37,2.27)
126-225	226-325	1.39 (1.12,1.73)	2.07 (1.64,2.63)
101-200	201-300	1.69 (1.36,2.10)	2.63 (2.12,3.25)
76-175	176-275	2.02 (1.64,2.48)	3.09 (2.49,3.85)
51-150	151-250	1.85 (1.51,2.27)	3.02 (2.48,3.68)
26-125	126-225	2.04 (1.68,2.46)	3.28 (2.73,3.94)
0-100	101-200	2.17 (1.81,2.60)	3.76 (3.15,4.49)

## References

1. Egger M, Hirschel B, Francioli P, Sudre P, Wirz M, Flepp M et al. Impact of new antiretroviral combination therapies in HIV infected patients in Switzerland: prospective multicentre study. *Br.Med.J.* 1997;315(7117):1194-9.
2. Palella FJ, Delaney KM, Moorman AC, Loveless MO, Fuhrer J, Satten GA et al. Declining Morbidity and Mortality Among Patients with Advanced Human Immunodeficiency Virus Infection. *The New England Journal of Medicine* 1998;338(13):853-908.
3. Hammer SM, Squires KE, Hughes MD, Grimes JM, Demeter LM, Currier JS et al. A controlled trial of two nucleoside analogues plus indinavir in persons with human immunodeficiency virus infection and CD4 cell counts of 200 per cubic millimeter or less. *N.Engl.J.Med.* 1997;337:725-33.
4. Cole SR, Hernan MA, Robins JM, Anastos K, Chmiel J, Detels R et al. Effect of highly active antiretroviral therapy on time to acquired immunodeficiency syndrome or death using marginal structural models. *Am.J.Epidemiol.* 2003;158(7):687-94.
5. Sterne JA, Hernan MA, Ledergerber B, Tilling K, Weber R, Sendi P et al. Long-term effectiveness of potent antiretroviral therapy in preventing AIDS and death: a prospective cohort study. *Lancet* 2005;366(9483):378-84.
6. El-Sadr WM, Lundgren JD, Neaton JD, Gordin F, Abrams D, Arduino RC et al. CD4+ count-guided interruption of antiretroviral treatment. *N Engl J Med* 2006;355(22):2283-96.
7. Emery S, Neuhaus JA, Phillips AN, Babiker A, Cohen CJ, Gatell JM et al. Major clinical outcomes in antiretroviral therapy (ART)-naive participants and in those not receiving ART at baseline in the SMART study. *J Infect Dis* 2008;197(8):1133-44.
8. Hogg RS, Yip B, Chan KJ, Wood E, Craib KJ, O'Shaughnessy MV et al. Rates of disease progression by baseline CD4 cell count and viral load after initiating triple-drug therapy. *JAMA* 2001;286(20):2568-77.
9. Phillips AN, Staszewski S, Weber R, Kirk O, Francioli P, Miller V et al. HIV viral load response to antiretroviral therapy according to the baseline CD4 cell count and viral load. *JAMA* 2001;286(20):2560-7.
10. Egger M, May M, Chêne G, Phillips AN, Ledergerber B, Dabis F et al. Prognosis of HIV-1-infected patients starting highly active antiretroviral therapy: a collaborative analysis of prospective studies. *Lancet* 2002;360(9327):119-29.
11. Pomerantz RJ. Initiating antiretroviral therapy during HIV infection: confusion and clarity. *JAMA* 2001;286(20):2597-9.
12. Cole SR, Li R, Anastos K, Detels R, Young M, Chmiel JS et al. Accounting for leadtime in cohort studies: evaluating when to initiate HIV therapies. *Stat Med* 2004;23(21):3351-63.
13. Prins M, Hernandez A, I, Brettle RP, Robertson JR, Broers B, Carre N et al. Pre-AIDS mortality from natural causes associated with HIV disease progression: evidence from the European Seroconverter Study among injecting drug users. *AIDS* 1997;11(14):1747-56.

14. Wood E, Montaner JS, Yip B, Tyndall MW, Schechter MT, O'Shaughnessy MV et al. Adherence and plasma HIV RNA responses to highly active antiretroviral therapy among HIV-1 infected injection drug users. *CMAJ* 2003;169(7):656-61.
15. Sterne JA, May M, Sabin C, Phillips A, Costagliola D, Chêne G et al. Importance of baseline prognostic factors with increasing time since initiation of highly active antiretroviral therapy: collaborative analysis of cohorts of HIV-1-infected patients. *J Acquir Immune Defic Syndr* 2007;46(5):607-15.
16. Kaslow RA, Ostrow DG, Detels R, Phair JP, Polk BF, Rinaldo CR, Jr. The Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study: rationale, organization, and selected characteristics of the participants. *Am.J.Epidemiol.* 1987;126(2):310-8.
17. Ledergerber B, von Overbeck J, Egger M, Luethy R. The Swiss HIV cohort study: rationale, organization and selected baseline characteristics. *Sozial und Praeventivmedizin* 1994;39:387-94.
18. Grabar S, Pradier C, Le CE, Lancar R, Allavena C, Bentata M et al. Factors associated with clinical and virological failure in patients receiving a triple therapy including a protease inhibitor. *AIDS* 2000;14(2):141-9.
19. Binquet C, Chene G, Jacqmin-Gadda H, Journot V, V, Saves M, Lacoste D et al. Modeling Changes in CD4-positive T-Lymphocyte Counts after the Start of Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy and the Relation with Risk of Opportunistic Infections The Aquitaine Cohort, 1996-1997. *Am.J.Epidemiol.* 2001;153(4):386-93.
20. de WF, Lange JM, Houweling JT, Coutinho RA, Schellekens PT, van der NJ et al. Numbers of CD4+ cells and the levels of core antigens of and antibodies to the human immunodeficiency virus as predictors of AIDS among seropositive homosexual men. *J Infect Dis* 1988;158(3):615-22.
21. Mocroft A, Gill MJ, Davidson W, Phillips AN. Predictors of a viral response and subsequent virological treatment failure in patients with HIV starting a protease inhibitor. *AIDS* 1998;12(3):2161-7.
22. Porter K, Babiker A, Bhaskaran K, Darbyshire J, Pezzotti P, Porter K et al. Determinants of survival following HIV-1 seroconversion after the introduction of HAART. *Lancet* 2003;362(9392):1267-74.
23. Egger M, May M, Chene G, Phillips AN, Ledergerber B, Dabis F et al. Prognosis of HIV-1-infected patients starting highly active antiretroviral therapy: a collaborative analysis of prospective studies. *Lancet* 2002;360(9327):119-29.
24. May M, Royston P, Egger M, Justice AC, Sterne JA, ART Cohort Collaboration. Development and validation of a prognostic model for survival time data: application to prognosis of HIV positive patients treated with antiretroviral therapy. *Stat Med* 2003;23:2375-98.
25. May M, Porter K, Sterne J, Royston P, Egger M. Prognostic model for HIV-1 disease progression in patients starting antiretroviral therapy was validated using independent data. *J Clin Epidemiol* 2005;58:1033-41.
26. Gras L, Kesselring AM, Griffin JT, van Sighem AI, Fraser C, Ghani AC et al. CD4 cell counts of 800 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> or greater after 7 years of highly active antiretroviral therapy are feasible in most patients starting with 350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> or greater. *J Acquir Immune Defic Syndr* 2007;45(2):183-92.

27. D'Arminio MA, Lepri AC, Rezza G, Pezzotti P, Antinori A, Phillips AN et al. Insights into the reasons for discontinuation of the first highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART) regimen in a cohort of antiretroviral naive patients. I.CO.N.A. Study Group. Italian Cohort of Antiretroviral-Naive Patients. *AIDS* 2000;14(5):499-507.
28. Brodt HR, Kamps BS, Gute P, Knupp B, Staszewski S, Helm EB. Changing incidence of AIDS-defining illnesses in the era of antiretroviral combination therapy. *AIDS* 1997;11:1731-8.
29. Fatkenheuer G, Theisen A, Rockstroh J, Grabow T, Wicke C, Becker K et al. Virological treatment failure of protease inhibitor therapy in an unselected cohort of HIV-infected patients. *AIDS* 1997;11:F113-F116.
30. Becker SL, Raffanti SR, Hansen NI, Fusco JS, Fusco GP, Slatko GH et al. Zidovudine and stavudine sequencing in HIV treatment planning: findings from the CHORUS HIV cohort. *J Acquir.Immune.Defic.Syndr.* 2001;26(1):72-81.
31. Chen RY, Accortt NA, Westfall AO, Mugavero MJ, Raper JL, Cloud GA et al. Distribution of health care expenditures for HIV-infected patients. *Clin Infect Dis* 2006;42(7):1003-10.
32. Fultz SL, Skanderson M, Mole LA, Gandhi N, Bryant K, Crystal S et al. Development and verification of a "virtual" cohort using the National VA Health Information System. *Med Care* 2006;44(8 Suppl 2):S25-S30.
33. Mocroft A, Barry S, Sabin CA, Lepri AC, Kinloch S, Drinkwater A et al. The changing pattern of admissions to a London hospital of patients with HIV: 1988-1997. Royal Free Centre for HIV Medicine. *AIDS* 1999;13(10):1255-61.
34. Hogg RS, Yip B, Kully C, Craib KJ, O'Shaughnessy MV, Schechter MT et al. Improved survival among HIV-infected patients after initiation of triple-drug antiretroviral regimens. *CMAJ.* 1999;160(5):659-65.
35. Jaen A, Casabona J, Esteve A, Miro JM, Tural C, Ferrer E et al. [Clinical-epidemiological characteristics and antiretroviral treatment trends in a cohort of HIV infected patients. The PISCIS Project]. *Med Clin (Barc)* 2005;124(14):525-31.
36. Lundgren JD, Phillips AN, Vella S, Katlama C, Ledergerber B, Johnson AM et al. Regional differences in use of antiretroviral agents and primary prophylaxis in 3122 European HIV-infected patients. EuroSIDA Study Group. *J Acquir.Immune.Defic.Syndr.Hum.Retrovirol.* 1997;16(3):153-60.
37. Rubin D. Multiple Imputation for Nonresponse in Surveys. **New York: Wiley;** 1987.
38. May M, Sterne JA, Sabin C, Costagliola D, Justice AC, Thiebaut R et al. Prognosis of HIV-1-infected patients up to 5 years after initiation of HAART: collaborative analysis of prospective studies. *AIDS* 2007;21(9):1185-97.
39. Palella FJ, Jr., Finkelstein DM, Satten G, Aschman DA, Hughes MD, Johnson VA et al. Survival benefit of initiating antiretroviral therapy in HIV-infected persons in different CD4+ cell strata. *Ann Intern Med* 2003;138(8):620-6.
40. Sterling TR, Chaisson RE, Moore RD. Initiation of highly active antiretroviral therapy at CD4+ T lymphocyte counts of >350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>: disease progression, treatment durability, and drug toxicity. *Clin Infect Dis* 2003;36(6):812-5.

41. Jaen A, Esteve A, Miro JM, Tural C, Montoliu A, Ferrer E et al. Determinants of HIV progression and assessment of the optimal time to initiate highly active antiretroviral therapy: PISCIS Cohort (Spain). *J Acquir Immune Defic Syndr* 2008;47(2):212-20.
42. Hammer SM, Saag MS, Schechter M, Montaner JS, Schooley RT, Jacobsen DM et al. Treatment for adult HIV infection: 2006 recommendations of the International AIDS Society-USA panel. *JAMA* 2006;296(7):827-43.
43. Braitstein P, Brinkhof MW, Dabis F, Schechter M, Boulle A, Miotti P et al. Mortality of HIV-1-infected patients in the first year of antiretroviral therapy: comparison between low-income and high-income countries. *Lancet* 2006;367(9513):817-24.
44. From the Centers for Disease Control. Recommendations for prophylaxis against *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia for adults and adolescents infected with HIV. *JAMA* 1992;267(17):2294-9.
45. Masur H. Recommendations on prophylaxis and therapy for disseminated *Mycobacterium avium* complex disease in patients infected with the human immunodeficiency virus. Public Health Service Task Force on Prophylaxis and Therapy for *Mycobacterium avium* Complex. *N Engl J Med* 1993;329(12):898-904.
46. Seligmann M, Warrell DA, Aboulker JP, Carbon C, Darbyshire JH, Dormont J et al. Concorde: MRC/ANRS randomised double-blind controlled trial of immediate and deferred zidovudine in symptom-free HIV infection. *Lancet* 1994;343:871-81.
47. Delta Coordinating Committee. Delta: a randomised double-blind controlled trial comparing combinations of zidovudine plus didanosine or zalcitabine with zidovudine alone in HIV-infected individuals. *Lancet* 1996;348(9023):283-91.
48. Moore RD, Keruly JC, Gebo KA, Lucas GM. An improvement in virologic response to highly active antiretroviral therapy in clinical practice from 1996 through 2002. *J Acquir Immune Defic Syndr* 2005;39(2):195-8.
49. Lampe FC, Gatell JM, Staszewski S, Johnson MA, Pradier C, Gill MJ et al. Changes over time in risk of initial virological failure of combination antiretroviral therapy: a multicohort analysis, 1996 to 2002. *Arch Intern Med* 2006;166(5):521-8.
50. Wood E, Hogg RS, Harrigan PR, Montaner JS. When to initiate antiretroviral therapy in HIV-1-infected adults: a review for clinicians and patients. *Lancet Infect Dis* 2005;5(7):407-14.
51. Phillips AN, Gazzard BG, Clumeck N, Losso MH, Lundgren JD. When should antiretroviral therapy for HIV be started? *Br.Med.J.* 2007;334(7584):76-8.
52. Chun TW, Fauci AS. Latent reservoirs of HIV: obstacles to the eradication of virus. *Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A* 1999;96(20):10958-61.
53. Carr A, Samaras K, Thorisdottir A, Kaufmann GR, Chisholm DJ, Cooper DA. Diagnosis, prediction, and natural course of HIV-1 protease-inhibitor-associated lipodystrophy, hyperlipidaemia, and diabetes mellitus: a cohort study. *Lancet* 1999;353(9170):2093-9.
54. Grinspoon S, Carr A. Cardiovascular risk and body-fat abnormalities in HIV-infected adults. *N Engl J Med* 2005;352(1):48-62.
55. d'Arminio Monforte A, Lepri AC, Rezza G, Pezzotti P, Antinori A, Phillips AN et al. Insights into the reasons for discontinuation of the first highly active antiretroviral

- therapy (HAART) regimen in a cohort of antiretroviral naive patients. I.CO.N.A. Study Group. Italian Cohort of Antiretroviral-Naive Patients. *AIDS* 2000;14(5):499-507.
56. Friis-Moller N, Sabin CA, Weber R, d'Arminio MA, El Sadr WM, Reiss P et al. Combination antiretroviral therapy and the risk of myocardial infarction. *N.Engl.J.Med.* 2003;349(21):1993-2003.
  57. Friis-Moller N, Reiss P, Sabin CA, Weber R, Monforte A, El-Sadr W et al. Class of antiretroviral drugs and the risk of myocardial infarction. *N.Engl.J.Med.* 2007;356(17):1723-35.
  58. Nolan D, Mallal S. Antiretroviral-therapy-associated lipodystrophy: current status and future directions. *Sex Health* 2005;2(3):153-63.
  59. Mocroft A, Brettle R, Kirk O, Blaxhult A, Parkin JM, Antunes F et al. Changes in the cause of death among HIV positive subjects across Europe: results from the EuroSIDA study. *AIDS* 2002;16(12):1663-71.
  60. Phillips AN, Neaton J, Lundgren JD. The role of HIV in serious diseases other than AIDS. *AIDS* 2008;22(18):2409-18.
  61. Lane HC, Neaton JD. When to start therapy for HIV infection: a swinging pendulum in search of data. *Ann Intern Med* 2003;138(8):680-1.
  62. Schechter M. Therapy for early HIV infection: how far back should the pendulum swing? *J Infect Dis* 2004;190(6):1043-5.
  63. Ho DD. Time to hit HIV, early and hard. *N Engl J Med* 1995;333(7):450-1.
  64. Burman WJ, Reves RR, Cohn DL. The case for conservative management of early HIV disease. *JAMA* 1998;280(1):93-5.
  65. Holmberg SD, Palella FJ, Jr., Lichtenstein KA, Havlir DV. The case for earlier treatment of HIV infection. *Clin Infect Dis* 2004;39(11):1699-704.
  66. Hammer SM, Eron JJ, Jr., Reiss P, Schooley RT, Thompson MA, Walmsley S et al. Antiretroviral treatment of adult HIV infection: 2008 recommendations of the International AIDS Society-USA panel. *JAMA* 2008;300(5):555-70.
  67. Panel on Antiretroviral Guidelines for Adults and Adolescents. Guidelines for the use of antiretroviral agents in HIV-1-infected adults and adolescents. Department of Health and Human Services. Services. November 3, 2008; 1-139. Available at <http://www.aidsinfo.nih.gov/ContentFiles/AdultandAdolescentGL.pdf>, accessed 15 January 2009.
  68. Clumeck N, Pozniak A, Raffi F. European AIDS Clinical Society (EACS) guidelines for the clinical management and treatment of HIV-infected adults. *HIV Med* 2008;9(2):65-71.
  69. Phillips AN, Dunn D, Sabin C, Pozniak A, Matthias R, Geretti AM et al. Long term probability of detection of HIV-1 drug resistance after starting antiretroviral therapy in routine clinical practice. *AIDS* 2005;19(5):487-94.
  70. Cox C, Chu H, Schneider MF, Munoz A. Parametric survival analysis and taxonomy of hazard functions for the generalized gamma distribution. *Stat Med* 2007;26(23):4352-74.