116 potentially relevant articles identified and screened for retrieval

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56 were excluded because they were irrelevant to our subject

60 potentially appropriate studies regarding HIV/AIDS and adherence were further reviewed

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8 studies were excluded because:
• they were reviews (6)
• they were editorial articles (2)

52 studies included data relevant to the association between SES and adherence to antiretroviral treatment

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26 were excluded because they focused on:
• quality of life of HIV patients (1)
• determinants of health literacy in Latino population (1)
• association between health literacy, health status, and health related knowledge (1)
• interventions for risk reduction in the whole population and enhanced medical care for HIV patients (1)
• evaluation of a program to enhance health literacy in low-income HIV-infected Latino men and women (1)
• cognitive and physical health determinants of exercise adherence (1)
• patient’s understanding regarding prescription information (1)
• the relationship between patient’s attitude towards medication and adherence (2)
• complementary therapy for HIV patients (1)
• pharmacological and medical treatment (6)
• tuberculosis therapy in HIV patients (2)
• physician’s experience and beliefs regarding drug users patients adherence to treatment (1)
• the association between adherence and virological suppression (1)
• prevention of HIV transmission (1)
• patient’s knowledge on antiretroviral treatment (1)
• the association between SES with survival from HIV-disease (1)
• indirect influence of sociodemographic characteristics on predictors of adherence (2)
• health literacy [exclusively] and its influence on adherence (1)

26 studies remained for further analysis

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9 studies were excluded because:
• they referred to children (3)
• they referred to couples [not individuals] (1)
• they referred to illicit drug users infected with HIV (5)

17 original studies remained for further analysis and were included in our review