Reviewer's report

Title: Higher pre-infection vitamin E levels are associated with higher mortality in HIV-1-infected Kenyan women: a prospective study

Version: 3 Date: 7 May 2007

Reviewer: Pierre CORBEAU

Reviewer's report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Point 2. As compared with previously published CD4 slopes (e.g. Ann. Intern. Med. 126(12):946-54, 1997) the rate of CD4 decline observed in the authors cohort is low. Hypotheses accounting for this difference must be at least proposed in the discussion (HIV subtype ? genetic background ? …)

Point 3. The fact that the set point viral load tended to be linked to the time to CD4 count<200 cells/ml should be stated in the text and the numbers given.

Point 4. The paper by Glynn et al. should be cited in the discussion. The argument will then be: in this cohort the survival among HIV-infected subjects is similar to that among other seroconverter cohorts (Clin. Infect. Dis. 42(9):1333-9, 2006), in which HIV has been causally related to death among those who are infected (AIDS 21(5):625-32, 2007).

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

The only competing interest I may have is to have previously published on Vitamin E and CCR5 expression.