

Dr Ower

cc. Dr Smithies  
Dr Sibellas  
Mr Murray

AIDS AND THE USE OF INTRAMUSCULAR IMMUNOGLOBULINS

We get many queries on the possibility that intramuscular immunoglobulins may transmit HTLV III.

Up to yesterday's EAGA meeting I have been replying along the following lines which I think are agreed by my colleagues and were endorsed by the Advisory Group on Hepatitis on 31st October.

"Our advisers have agreed that there is no epidemiological evidence for the transmission of AIDS through the routine use of intramuscular immunoglobulin. The method of production is thought to inactivate any live virus. This endorses WHO's view published August 1983.

We are considering issuing advice more generally on this point."

At yesterday's meeting of EAGA some doubt was cast on the method of production inactivating the virus and several members spoke of evidence that (at least in some preparations) virus may get through.

As far as I know it was agreed that several members of EAGA get together to consider the problem.

There is also the complication that Dr Smith said that the Committee on Safety of Medicines are reviewing immunoglobulins.

I think we need to discuss and agree what our interim policy is. We can maintain the line previously agreed even though this has had the finger of suspicion pointed at it by EAGA. We can say that there are now doubts but we hope to resolve them within a few months. This last statement would cause a lot of panic and brings into question what do we do about the more optimistic advice given previously and sometimes in writing. Are we obliged to issue corrections?

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