

# Bone mineral density in children and adolescents with vertical HIV infection.

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**BACKGROUND:** Chronic diseases are the main causes of bone mass reduction in childhood and adolescence. Different aspects related to the process of bone acquisition and maintenance may be affected. Studies had point out the presence of bone mass reduction in children and adolescents with HIV infection with association to antiretroviral use, chronological age (CA), weight and serum CD4 T-cell counts. However, others do not.

**OBJECTIVE:** To evaluate bone mineral density in children and adolescents with vertically HIV infection and associated factors.

**METHODS:** Observational study in 46 vertically HIV-infected children and adolescents aged  $7.7 \pm 3.5$  years (17 males). Age, sex, weight, height, CDC clinical categories, bone mineral density (BMD) at lumbar spine (DXA), blood calcium, phosphorus, alkaline phosphatase (AP), CD4 and CD8 T-cell counts, IGF-1, viral load and uCa/Creat were evaluated. BMD, weight and height were expressed in Z-score. Reduced BMD was defined as Z-score  $\leq -2$  DP. Linear regressions, U-Mann-Whitney, Kruskal-Wallis and Fisher tests were used in statistical analyses. Human Ethics Comity approved the study.

**RESULTS:** Reduced bone mass occurred in 13.0%. These patients had higher CA (12.3 vs 7.5;  $p < 0.01$ ), AP (232.7 vs 165.4;  $p < 0.01$ ) and IGF-1 (464.8 vs 195.4;  $p < 0.01$ ); and lower CD4 (356.8 vs 761.8;  $p < 0.01$ ) and uCa/Creat (0.1 vs 0.6;  $p < 0.01$ ) (Table 1). BMD correlated positively with CD4 and negatively with CA (Figure 1) and IGF-1. In multivariate analysis BMD correlated with CD4, CA, AP, uCa/Creat and IGF-1 ( $r = 0.950$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Adolescents had higher proportion of reduced BMD and lower BMD (Table 2). Lower BMD was also observed in patients classified in C clinical category (-0.98 vs -0.73 vs -2.33 category A, B and C respectively;  $p = 0.05$ )

**CONCLUSIONS:** Vertical HIV infection are associated with reduced bone mass, especially during adolescence. The association of low bone mass to low CD4 and higher chronological age suggests that duration of infection and clinical conditions affects bone mineral acquisition in this group.

Table 1: Clinical and biochemical data according to BMD group.

	Total (n=46)	Groups		p* Value
		Low Bone Mass (n=6)	Normal Bone Mass (n=40)	
Age (year)	8.1 ± 3.6	12.3 ± 2.9	7.5 ± 3.3	< 0.01
Weight for age (Z-score)	-0.8 ± 0.8	-1.0 ± 0.8	-0.8 ± 0.9	NS
Height for age (Z-score)	-1.1 ± 1.8	-1.2 ± 0.6	-1.1 ± 1.9	NS
CD4 count (cells/mm <sup>3</sup> )	709.0 ± 517.8	356.8 ± 240.5	761.8 ± 529.1	< 0.01
CD8 count (cells/mm <sup>3</sup> )	1,256.7 ± 613.6	1,153.1 ± 681.1	1,272.2 ± 610.7	NS
Viral load (copies/ml)	35,157.7 ± 71,830.7	4,980.0 ± 5,672.8	39,681.0 ± 76,080.4	0.05
Antiretroviral therapy (months)	43.7 ± 33.2	51.1 ± 34.2	42.5 ± 33.4	NS
Alkaline Phosphatase (U/L)	176.6 ± 64.4	232.7 ± 33.7	165.4 ± 63.5	< 0.01
Ca/Creat <sub>u</sub> (mg/mg)**	0.5 ± 0.8	0.1 ± 0.1	0.6 ± 0.9	< 0.05
IGF-1 (ng/ml)***	249.3 ± 187.0	464.8 ± 295.6	195.4 ± 10.6	< 0.05
PCR (mg/dl) <sup>†</sup>	0.3 ± 0.3	0.4 ± 0.5	0.3 ± 0.3	NS
BMD (Z-score)	-0.96 ± 1.10	-3.00 ± 0.60	-0.65 ± 0.70	< 0.001

\* U-Mann-Whitney; \*\* urinary calcium/creatinine ratio; \*\*\* insulin like growth factor # n=27.

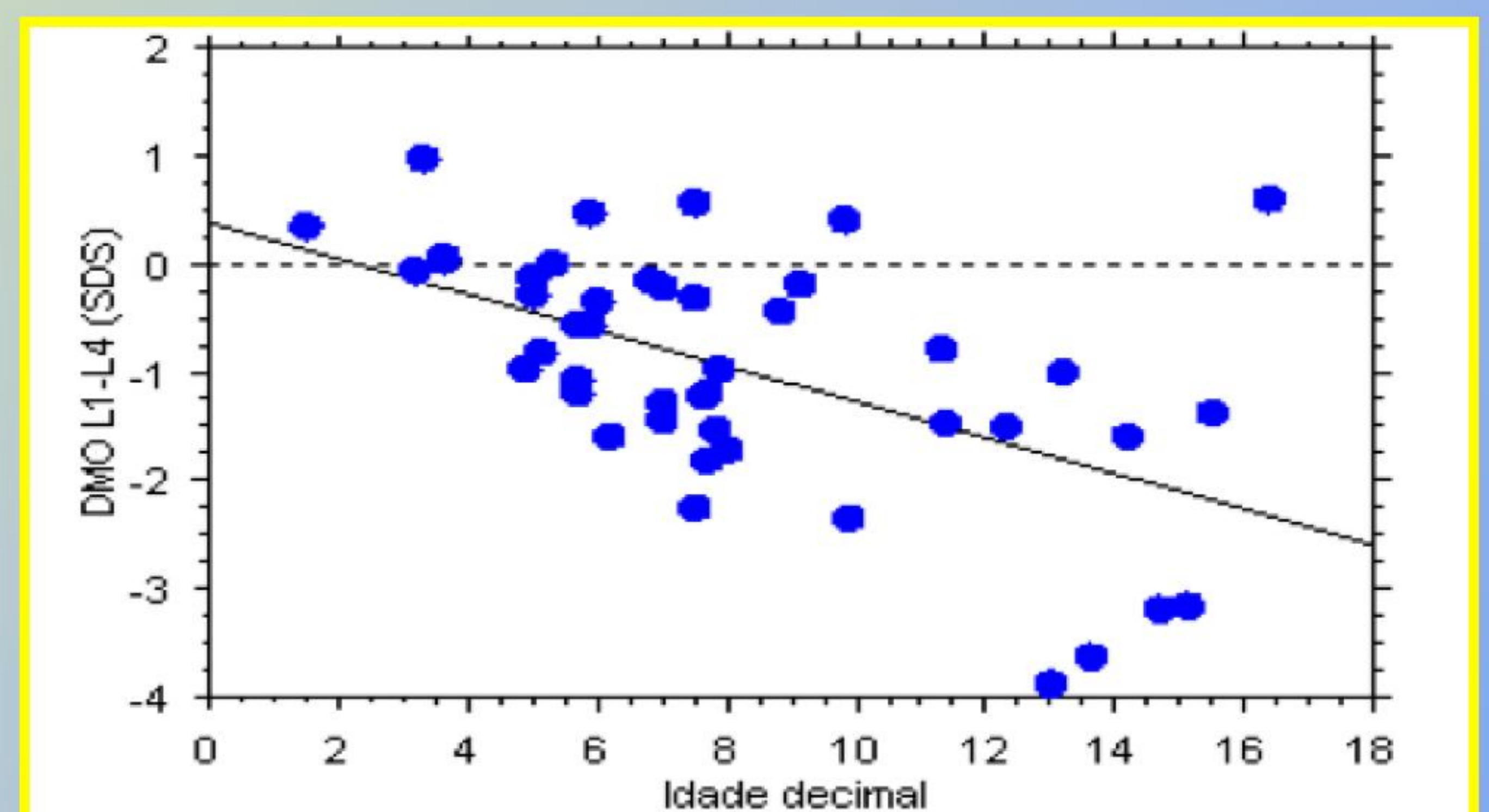


FIGURE 1: Simple linear regression between BMD and chronological age.

Table 2: Bone mass in relation to age group.

	Normal Bone Mass n (%)	Low Bone Mass n (%)	BMD Z-score media ± DP
Preschoolers (2-5 years)	15 (37.5%)	0 (0%)	-0.31 ± 0.61
Schoolers (6-9 years)	17 (42.5%)	2 (33.3%)	-1.11 ± 0.79
Adolescents (10-19 years)	7 (17.5%)	4 (66.7%)*	-1.91 ± 1.38**
<b>Total</b>	<b>40 (100%)</b>	<b>6 (100%)</b>	<b>-0.96 ± 1.10</b>

\* Fisher  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\* Kruskal Wallis  $p < 0.001$ .

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