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[HIV-AIDS](#) : Herbal tonic shows promise as HIV/AIDS treatment
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Recent studies have shown that a dietary supplement made predominantly from 'Sorghum Bicolor' has incredibly more antioxidant power than any other known plant and is currently being marketed as "Jobelyn" all over the world by Health Forever Products Limited.

The base ingredient is guinea corn, in hausa, karan dafi or daawaa, in yoruba, oka pupa ajagama and is a major food crop in Africa and India as well as an important livestock feed in the Americas. It is also used in the making of alcohol and the dye extracted from it is used by the leather and textile industries as well as for body decoration.

Traditionally used as a treatment for anemia in the northern and western parts of Nigeria, this prompted further research into its effect on blood parameters. The Pharmacotherapy group of the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Benin and the Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Science of the same University, concluded in their research published in the African Journal of Biochemistry of September 2003, "Jobelyn can resolve the Packed Cell Volume (PCV) and Haemoglobin (Hb) concentrations in anemic conditions and is a potential substitute for transfusion." In an abstract submitted to the Scientific Committee of the 35th International Congress on Military Medicine (ICMM) held in Washington DC, USA September 2004, a pathologist at the Military Hospital Ikoyi, Lagos, Colonel Godwin Ayuba, stated "Jobelyn is a good alternative and / or supplement to anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs), in the management of HIV/AIDS patients. Ayuba conducted the clinical studies in collaboration with Dr. Patrick Erah of the Department of Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmacy Practice, University of Benin.

In a preliminary study involving 64 patients, Jobelyn significantly increased the CD4 counts in HIV/AIDS patients receiving ARVs. Anti-HIV activity has been confirmed by laboratory studies. A study carried out on its efficacy at the Military Hospital, Lagos titled, "Effect of Jobelyn, a Nigerian Herbal Extract on the cellular Immunity of persons living with HIV/AIDS," showed that the herbal dietary supplement boosted the immunity as well as relieved opportunistic infections in persons living with HIV/AIDS.

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the efficacy of Jobelyn in enhancing the cellular immunity in HIV infected persons. 36 males and 28 females HIV/AIDS patients who regularly attended the clinic at the Military Hospital, Lagos between May and September 2003

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Results

were recruited for the study. All were confirmed to be HIV 1 and 11 positive using the western blot technique.

Patients were grouped into three: Group A had CD4 count (immune system marker) greater than 300, was placed on Jobelyn capsule twice daily for 12 weeks. Group B had CD4 count less than 300 and got one capsule of Jobelyn twice daily plus Highly Active Anti Retroviral Therapy (HAART) - Nevirapine (200mg bd), Lamivudine (150mg bd) and Stavudine (40mg bd) - for 12 weeks. Group C had CD4 count less than 300 and got Nevirapine (200mg bd), Lamivudine (150mg bd), and Stavudine (40mg bd) for 12 weeks. CD4 counts at start-off, six and twelve weeks were determined using the coulter counting method.

The result showed significant increase in the CD4 levels of 40 patients placed on Jobelyn and HAART when compared to the 17 on HAART alone. Jobelyn alone significantly increased the CD4 counts of seven patients with initial CD4 counts greater than 300. Patients placed on Jobelyn plus HAART showed up to 91.4% mean rise after the administration of the drugs, those placed on Jobelyn alone had an increase of 43%, while those placed on HAART alone had up to 30.5% increase in CD4 count.

Other findings include an increase in patients' appetite and weight and there was a general improvement in their general well-being. The maculo-papular skin rashes of three patients, who had herpes-zoster, went into remission.

Mr. Olajuwon Okubena who discovered Jobelyn in 1994 presented a paper at the just concluded ICASA conference titled, "Efficacy of African herbal medicines in the treatment of HIV positive African Population - Jobelyn as a case study". He said, "Jobelyn is a herbal preparation from the leaves of tropical plants. It was originally marketed in Nigeria under the trade name, Jubi Formula. The component herbs of Jobelyn have been used by natives of South-Western Nigeria for more than a century to treat diseases of diverse origins including sickle-cell anemia, leukemia, cancer, arthritis, multiple myeloma, heart and other blood related problems. The main active ingredient is sorghum bicolor". Jobelyn, "contained proanthocyanins having antioxidant capabilities 1,590 times more powerful than vitamin E. Jobelyn is an effective adjuvant in the management of HIV/AIDS".

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