



Memorandum

Date August 19, 1985

From Mika Popovic, M.D., LTCB, DTP, DCT, NCI

Subject Copies of Protocols on HTLV-III/LAV Detection, Isolation, and Propagation

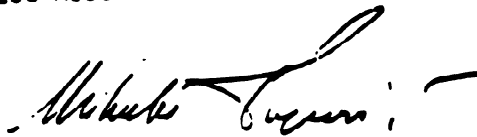
To Howard Streicher, M.D., LTCB, DTP, DCT, NCI

Enclosed please find the requested copies of protocols on detection of AIDS virus (HTLV-III), its isolation, and propagation. If you or anybody else do not find these protocols satisfactory, please take the following points and circumstances into consideration.

1. I am not aware of any common policy at NIH regarding how the protocols should be recorded, and I was never instructed before the patent application on HTLV-III detection was submitted about regulations as to how protocols should be kept. The only policy which I am aware of and that should be followed by any scientist is that the published results should be reproducible.
2. During the elucidation of the cause of AIDS I did not work for a patent. I was, first of all, concentrating on the identification of the causative agent of AIDS and, in collaboration with Drs. M. Sarngadharan and J. Schubbach (LTCB, NCI), attempted to work out an assay for blood banks. At present time only the most malicious people can deny that both problems were not perfectly solved.
3. In December 1983 Mr. William New (from NCI administration) on Dr. DeVita's orders gave me a few days' notice to move my tissue culture laboratory from room 6B22 to the newly adopted tissue culture laboratories in room 6B03. In spite of our verbal protests that the new laboratories were not properly adjusted, I had to move the laboratory from 6B22 to 6B03 within 48 hours. The consequence of this decision was that we (Ms. E. Richardson, R. Zicht, and myself) did not have time to keep detailed notes. In time, we (Ms. E. Richardson and myself) did inform Dr. R. C. Gallo about the critical situation in our laboratories and Dr. Gallo immediately told Mr. New, Dr. Chabner, Dr. John Driscoll, and Dr. DeVita.
4. As concerning LAV from Montagnier: we were, of course, never sent a cell line producing virus (even to this day). We sent them our H9 producing prototype HTLV-III in May 1984. We received only a small amount of extracellular virus particles at the end of September 1983. We soon began testing it for reverse transcriptase (RT) activity. We confirmed that it had retroviral like RT activity. We transmitted it to cord blood T cells which, of course, gives transient production and then kills the T-cell and the virus and cells are lost. These results showed it was negative for HTLV-I and -II specific p19 and p24 confirming it was not identical to these viruses. A stock of remaining extracellular virus was put away for later testing with HTLV-III specific reagents if and when they become available.

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By December 1983 we had prepared specific reagents against HTLV-III. We then transmitted LAV to a cell line developed at M.D. Anderson Hospital known as TI 7.4. This T-cell line yielded reproducible but low-level LAV. We later tested our reagents against this cell line and eventually showed that LAV and HTLV-III had cross-reactive major proteins. We concluded that they could be related viruses or the same general subtype. By January-February 1984 others in our group showed that more than 90% of AIDS sera reacted with HTLV-III specific proteins. We never "scaled-up" LAV for comparable testing but noted that as late as October-November 1983 Montagnier found only 20% AIDS sera reacted with LAV.



Mika Popovic, M.D.

MP/bj

Enclosures-Protocols: E. Richardson 1-26
E. Read 26-45
M. Popovic 46-97

cc Dr. P. Fischinger
Dr. R.C. Gallo