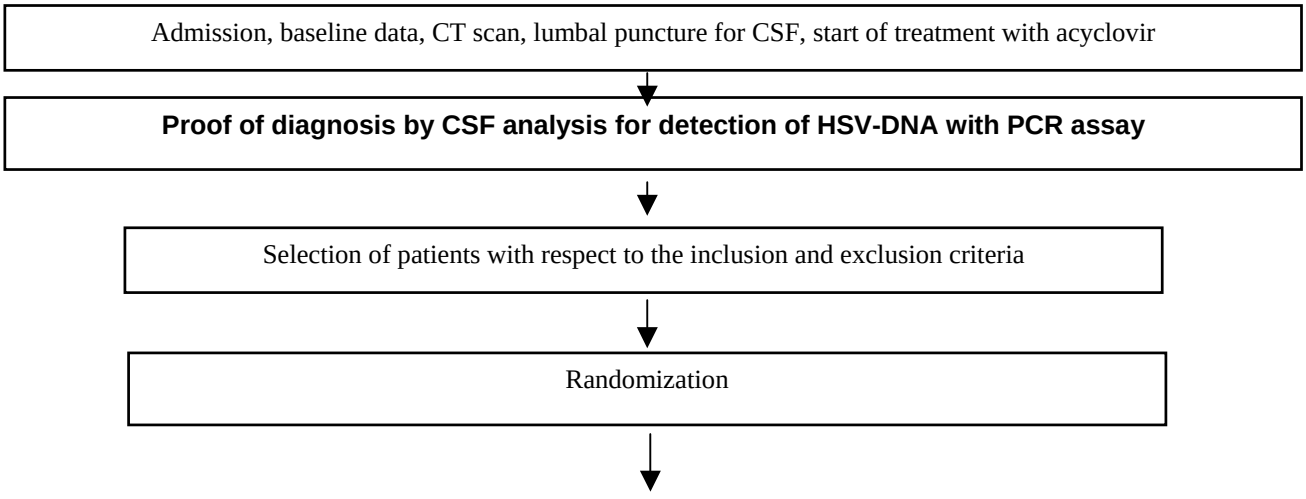
Figure: Schematic diagram of study design



	Experimental group: **Treatment with adjuvant dexamethasone** **Aciclovir: 10mg/kg BW acyclovir (intravenously, 1 hour infusion) every 8 hours for 14 days** **Dosage adaptation in case of decreased creatinine clearance** **Dexamethasone 40 mg intravenously every 24 hours for 4 days.**	**Control group:** **Treatment with placebo** **Aciclovir: 10mg/kg BW acyclovir (intravenously, 1 hour infusion) every 8 hours for 14 days** **Dosage adaptation in case of decreased creatinine clearance** **Placebo identical in appearance to dexamethasone infusion every 24 hours for 4 days**
Day 0 of study		
Day 0	• Neurological examination, GCS, pre-encephalitis Barthel Index, pre-encephalitis mRS, Neuropsychological test, seizures. • Cranial MRI-scan as soon as possible after positive HSV in CSF, at the latest 48 hours after initiation of study medication (Dexamethasone/Placebo).	
Day 7	• Physical and neurological examinations.	
Discharge at the latest Day 30	• Physical and neurological examinations, mRS, GOS, Barthel index, seizures.	
6 months after randomization	• Physical, neurological and neuropsychological examinations, mRS, GOS, qualitiy of life (EuroQol 5D), Barthel-Index, seizures. • Cranial MRI-scan.	
12 months after randomization	• Physical and neurological examinations, mRS, GOS, quality of life (EuroQol 5D), Barthel-Index, seizures.	