

TITLE: KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE REGARDING HBV INFECTION AND VACCINE AMONG HOSPITAL PATIENTS

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Background: Hepatitis B is a potentially life-threatening infection caused by the hepatitis B virus. It is the most serious type of viral hepatitis. About 400 million people have the virus, with most of these people living in Asia. Clearly, this is a significant public health and medical problem. With this background, the study was conducted to evaluate knowledge and attitude regarding HBV infection and its vaccine among the patients attending tertiary care hospital.

Materials and Methods: A Cross-sectional study was done among 856 patients attending a tertiary care hospital, at Mangalore, India, from November 2019 to May 2020 after approval from the institutional ethical committee. A pretested structured questionnaire was used to measure the participants' knowledge and attitude regarding HBV infection and its vaccine after obtaining informed consent.

Results: In all, 856 patients (698 male and 158 female) were studied. 50% of those who were aware had no knowledge about route of transmission, infectivity, or importance of vaccination. Educated individuals were more aware about hepatitis B vaccine ($P < 0.05$). The percentage of vaccination was 25% among study subjects. Lack of awareness was the common reason for non - vaccination (50%); of them.

Conclusions: Knowledge of Hepatitis B disease and vaccine was low and misconceptions were common. About One third of the population are vaccinated for hepatitis B. Emphasis should especially be laid on awareness campaigns to educate the public that hepatitis B is vaccine preventable disease. Knowledge of the hepatitis B disease may be useful in determining health care interventions strengthening community-based care for patients.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: None

OCCUPATIONAL RISK OF INFECTION WITH HEPATITIS C VIRUS:
THE DENTIST'S PERSPECTIVE.

BACKGROUND

Dental professionals may be exposed to blood borne viruses (BBV) carried in blood, oral fluids and tissues. Hepatitis C virus (HCV) is one of the principal blood borne pathogens of concern to dentists worldwide. Occupationally acquired hepatitis C viral infection is an important issue in dentistry since there are no known vaccines or effective prophylaxis. The aims of our questionnaire was to determine Dental surgeons' perceptions and attitudes regarding the risks of hepatitis C viral infection as well as the precautions used against infection.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A Cross-sectional study was done among 200 dental surgeons, at Mangalore, India using pretested structured questionnaire to determine the attitudes and perception of risks of occupational acquired hepatitis C viral infection as well as precautions among dental surgeons. Chi-square and Fisher's exact tests for categorical variables and student t-test for continuous variables were performed.

RESULTS

In all, a total of 145 surgeons responded (72.5%). Of respondents, 101 (70%) had sustained sharps injuries. Only (29%) always reported such injuries, although (84%) expressed concerns of occupationally acquired hepatitis C viral transmission. Most Dentists (58%) were either extremely or very concerned about the possibility of contracting HCV infection. Dental surgeons were mostly unaware of the true prevalence of hepatitis C in high-risk groups.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study revealed that post-exposure management was completely inadequate especially the reporting of occupational exposures. However, post-exposure management protocols exist in all dental clinics, but the implementation of the protocol appears to be suboptimal. Needle stick injuries are also of increasing concern to the dentists. Greater awareness of all aspects of hepatitis C infection and its risks to the practice of dentistry is required.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: None