

SPECTRUM OF HEPATITIS A VIRUS INFECTION IN INDIA

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This study was carried out to find out the role of HAV infection in sporadic acute hepatitis (AH), fulminant hepatic failure (FHF), subacute hepatic failure (SAHF) and epidemic hepatitis. Asymptomatic children were also included in the study to find out prevalence of subclinical infection. Diagnosis was confirmed on standard criteria.

One hundred adults and 27 children with AH, 134 patients with FHF, 52 patients with SAHF, 484 patients from epidemics and 70 healthy children were tested for HAV infection. The diagnosis of hepatitis A was established by a positive IgM anti-HAV, which was tested by ELISA or RIA.

HAV infection was present in 14% of adults and 67% of the children with AH, 6% of FHF and 2% of SAHF. Only one of the eight epidemics was caused by HAV. 30% asymptomatic children had presence of IgM anti-HAV.

The study concludes that HAV infection predominantly involves pediatric population in sporadic, epidemic and subclinical forms. A small proportion of adults suffer from this infection which may even result into complications like FHF and SAHF in a few.

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