

# **A survey on community perceptions of jaundice in east Delhi: Implications for the prevention and control of viral hepatitis**

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## **A survey on community perceptions of jaundice in east Delhi: Implications for the prevention and control of viral hepatitis**

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## **Abstract**

Using senior health professionals as interviewers, a 30-cluster sampling survey was carried out to investigate community perceptions of pilia (the local word for jaundice) in east Delhi (India). Of 416 persons (mostly mothers of children aged <2 years) interviewed, 339 (81%) were aware of pilia as an illness. Only 322 (77%), 164 (39%), 73 (18%) and 71 (17%) people knew about correct symptoms, dangers, causes and prevention of pilia. Most of the correct responses were related to the faeco-orally transmitted viral hepatitis. Literate respondents were significantly more aware of pilia ( $\chi^2$  52.81,  $P < 0.0001$ ), its symptoms ( $\chi^2$  48.88,  $P < 0.0001$ ), causes ( $\chi^2$  39.34,  $P < 0.0001$ ), dangers ( $\chi^2$  19.3,  $P = 0.0007$ ), and prevention ( $\chi^2$  60.8,  $P < 0.0001$ ). However, age of the respondents had no significant bearing ( $P \geq 0.05$ ) on the correctness of responses. About 293 (70%) subjects considered pilia as a treatable illness; of them, 193 (66%) and 77 (26%) respectively expressed their preference for the 'modern' and indigenous systems of medicine for its treatment. In contrast, 110 (38%) respondents said that they would prefer faith healers for the treatment of pilia. Although only 31 (7%) persons were aware of a vaccine against pilia (hepatitis B vaccine), virtually all agreed to have their children immunized if such a vaccine were made available. The study underscores the usefulness of pilia in lay-reporting of viral hepatitis and epidemiological studies on jaundice-associated illnesses and the need for educating the community about its causes and prevention to increase people's participation in controlling viral hepatitis and other diseases that mainly manifest as jaundice.

## **Reference**

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