

Sero-Epidemiological survey on toxoplasmosis and hepatitis in Calcutta/India

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Untersuchung über die Durchseuchung von Frauen im gebärfähigen Alter mit Toxoplasmose und Hepatitis in Kalkutta/Indien

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Summary

Sero-Epidemiological survey on toxoplasmosis and hepatitis in Calcutta/India The prevalence rates of toxoplasmosis and of hepatitis A and B were determined in 553 women of child-bearing age, most of whom were pregnant, from Calcutta/India. The toxoplasma prevalence rate of 23% found by the indirect fluorescent antibody test (> 1:16) was remarkably low compared with the rates in Central Europe. Indications of active infections were found in only 0.9%. There was a good agreement between the results gained by the fluorescent test and those by the indirect hemagglutination test, whereas 18% more positive results were attained by the more sensitive IgGenzyme- linked immunosorbent assay.

The low prevalence of toxoplasma antibodies may be explained by the rejection of eating meat among many Indians, mainly on religious grounds. On the other hand, in view of the prevailing climatic and hygienic conditions the requirements for the spread of oocysts shed by cats are present.

Regarding the infection with the hepatitis A virus, a heavy infection (98%) among all age groups examined (over 15 years) was found which is probably due to the difficult hygienic and socio-economic circumstances in Calcutta.

The hepatitis B prevalence rate of 1% hepatitis B surface antigen carriers and 19% hepatitis B virus antibody-positive women was unexpectedly low for tropical regions. One reason may be the strict conservative rules of behavior for Indian women with respect to their sexual activities. Furthermore, another reason can be the general reserve attitude against hospital treatment,

vaccination and family planning programmes. So much so, iatrogenic hepatitis infections may be less frequent.

Reference

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