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Epidemiological and immunological studies

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Acute sporadic non-A, non-B viral hepatitis of adults in India—Epidemiological and immunological studies

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Abstract

On the basis of tests for specific IgM class antibodies in the serum, infections by hepatitis A virus, hepatitis B virus and hepatitis non-A, non-B virus accounted for 7%, 37.8% and 54.2% respectively of 286 cases of acute sporadic viral hepatitis in adults from three different regions of India. Epstein-Barr virus and cytomegalovirus were insignificant (0.5–1%) aetiological agents. Approximately one-quarter of all non-A, non-B (NANB) cases were additionally HBsAg carriers; there were significant differences in regional frequencies. NANB hepatitis commonly affected individuals in the mid-fourth decade and occurred throughout the year with small peaks in different seasons. No antigen-antibody reaction could be demonstrated in various immunological tests including radioimmunobinding using acute and convalescent phase sera. Neither were virus-like particles visualized in acute phase sera on electron and immuno-electron microscopy. However, rhesus monkeys inoculated with acute phase serum from a case of NANB hepatitis developed distinct hepatocellular changes at 43–55 days after inoculation, which had some features of similarity with experimental NANB hepatitis of other simian species. Sporadic NANB hepatitis is a major health problem throughout India and intensive study is needed on its epidemiology and aetiology.

References

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