

Original Paper

Frequency of HBsAg in pregnant women in Gorgan, Iran

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Abstract

Background and Objective: The prevalence of hepatitis B infection is increasing worldwide. The main way to prevent hepatitis B transmission to newborns can be through accurate detection of HBsAg positive pregnant women and implementation of standard protocol for their infants. Therefore, this study carried out to determine the frequency of HBsAg in pregnant women in Gorgan, Iran.

Materials and Methods: This cross sectional study was done on 1553 pregnant women whom attended to Dezyani hospital in Gorgan, North of Iran during 2008-09. Blood samples were taken and tested for HBsAg and HBeAg using ELISA method.

Results: HBsAg was found positive in 15 (1%) pregnant women. However, HBeAg were negative in all cases. Seven of these cases (46.7%) were not diagnosed before admission to the hospital for delivery and therefore had not received any immunoprophylaxis or HBIG treatment for their newborns. In contrary, six mothers and their newborns received immunoprophylaxis due to falsely diagnosed HBsAg seropositive.

Conclusion: This study showed that the current protocols for dealing with HBsAg seropositivity and case finding among pregnant women in this region should be thoroughly revised. Furthermore, it is suggested that pregnant women during third trimester should be screened for HBsAg.

Keywords: HBsAg, HBeAg, Hepatitis, Pregnant women, Iran

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