

ACTUAL INCIDENCE OF HBV INFECTIONS IN REPEAT BLOOD DONORS IN NORTH-WEST ITALY: MORE THAN WE THOUGHT (P-210)

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The estimate of the incidence of de-novo HBV infections among repeat blood donors in Italy has been underestimated because of the screening of blood donors with HBsAg that is a transient marker of infection and because the mean number of donation in Italy is less than two per year (one every six months). From October 2003 all first time donors attended our blood bank have been screened for anti-HBc in addition to normal screening. 3971 blood donors among the 6928 anti-HBc negative at the first screening donated blood from that time at least in two occasions and have been tested for anti-HBc in all donations. They were 2497 males and 1474 females, their mean age was 35,2 years (range 18-62 years). The mean interval between the first and the last donation within this period was 401,1 days or 1,1 years. During the follow-up no cases of HCV or HIV infection were observed; none of the donors was ever found to be HBsAg+. Five donors of this cohort resulted anti-HBc+ in one of the following donations. Characteristics of these donors are listed in table 1. The incidence of new HBV infection among repeat donors resulted to be of 114,5 infections in 100000 donors per year (this data has been adjusted to the mean follow-up of the donors. So the actual incidence of new HBV infections among repeat donors in Italy is more than 3 times the estimated one (1) even corrected for the transient antigenemia (44 case per 100000 per year).

Table 1. Characteristics of donors with new HBV infection at time of seroconversion

DONOR	SEX	AGE	DAYS*	HBV MARKERS**
1	M	24	115	Anti-HBs+
2	F	51	183	None
3	M	35	50	Anti-HBs+ HBV-DNA+
4	F	51	92	Anti-HBs+ HBV-DNA+
5	M	22	182	Anti-HBs+

*Days since the last negative donation

**Other HBV markers at time of positivization

REFERENCES

1. M. Gonzales et al. Transfusion 2005 :1670-1675.