

Markers of Viral Infection in Haemophiliacs

Maryam R Tarar, Naumaan A Malik, A S Chughtai

Lahore Haemophilia Center, 8 Jail Road, Main Gulberg, Lahore.

Seroprevalence of Hepatitis B surface antigen (HbsAg), anti-HCV IgG and anti-HIV IgG was determined in 100 people with Haemophilia (PWH), registered with Haemophilia Patient Welfare Society (HPWS), Lahore Zone, Pakistan. The study shows that none of the PWH were infected with HIV whereas a modest 4% were positive for HbsAg. However, there was a high level of anti-HCV seropositivity (56%) in our PWH, including many patients in younger age groups. When compared with figures from PWH in other regions of Asia like 23% in Western India, 33% in Sri Lanka and 15% of those in Iran, this figure is one of the highest. This rate is a reflection of the same rising trend in our population that is now exceeding 10%. The practice of unscreened blood/blood-products transfusions in the backdrop of high prevalence of HCV in our population is responsible for high figures seen in PWH. The need is to increase awareness level amongst the patients, health care worker and policy makers about these transfusion associated viral infections in a group of patients who already had a hereditary disorder of severe nature.

Keywords: People with haemophilia (PWH), Blood borne viruses, HBV, HCV, HIV.