Prevalence of Hepatitis B Virus Infection among People Attending a Hepatitis Treatment and Control Centre in Karu, Nigeria

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Abstract

Hepatitis B virus (HBV) has remained a recurring decimal in vertical transmission, blood transfusion, liver cirrhosis and hepatocellular carcinoma. This study was therefore conducted to determine the prevalence of HBV infection in people wishing to know their serostatus. Six hundred and one people were enrolled for the study. Three ml of blood was collected from each participant, the serum harvested and tested for Hepatitis B surface antigen( HBsAg) as the seromarker for HBV infection using a rapid test kit(ACON USA). Their sociodemographic information was obtained through oral interview. Of the 601 participants screened, 39.1% were reactive for HBsAg with a sex stratified prevalence of 32.4% in males and 31.4% in females. With respect to age those aged 15 years and below had the least infection prevalence(15.4%) while the highest was among those aged 31 – 35 years(p > 0.05). Other parameters studied as possible risk factors included marital status, history of HBV vaccination and occupation (p > 0.05). The present study reported a very high HBV infection prevalence with obscured risk factors. This is a cause for alarm because of the implication of many people with the likelihood of transiting to end-stage liver diseases. It is vaccine preventable so urgent proactive strategies should be put in place for increased vaccine uptake and prevention and control measures.

Keywords: Hepatitis B Virus, Treatment and Control