

Hepatitis B Virus Markers in Male Blood Donors

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Objective: To study the prevalence of HBV infection with particular emphasis on the rate of hepatitis B surface antigen (HBSAg) and hepatitis B core antibody (anti-HBc) IgG type among apparently healthy blood donors at Aseer region, Saudi Arabia.

Material and method: A retrospective analysis of all blood bank records at Aseer Central Hospital, covering a total of 5174 blood donors during the period of one year starting in April 5, 2000, was carried out.

Results: A total of 4664 Saudis and 510 non-Saudis were screened for HBSAg, anti-HBc, and anti-HBs. The total exposure rate of HBV infection was 17.9% and 34% among Saudis and non-Saudis respectively. If HBSAg and anti-HBc are considered together, 11.7% of Saudi blood donors will be potentially infectious and are likely to transmit the disease. In addition, the total exposure rate increases with age, though, HBSAg carrier peaks at ages between 32-42 years.

Conclusion: The reported rate of total exposure of HBV infection is lower than other areas in Saudi Arabia but much higher than the Western countries. The prevalence of HBSAg peaks among highly productive age groups.