

# Seroprevalence of anti-HAV among patients with chronic viral liver disease

January 25 2011

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A research team from South Korea investigated the current seroprevalence of hepatitis A virus (HAV) antibodies in patients with chronic viral liver disease in Korea. They found that most Korean patients with chronic liver disease and who are above 40 years of age have already been exposed to HAV.

Hepatitis A virus (HAV) is an epidemiologically important virus with a worldwide distribution and causes acute hepatitis in humans. Acute HAV superinfection causes severe liver disease, acute liver failure and even higher mortality rates in patients with underlying chronic liver disease (CLD). Numerous studies have identified CLD as a risk factor for fulminant [hepatitis](#) and death from acute HAV infection.

A research article to be published on January 14, 2011 in the [World Journal of Gastroenterology](#) addresses this question. In this study, the authors investigated the current seroprevalence of HAV [antibodies](#) (anti-HAV) in patients with chronic viral liver disease in South Korea. They also tried to determine the age-specific seroprevalence in these patients to assess whether vaccination against HAV is necessary in all patients who have underlying viral liver diseases, and to determine the factors that affect IgG anti-HAV seropositivity.

This study showed that the overall prevalence of IgG anti-HAV in Korean patients with chronic viral liver disease was 86.61%, and most patients who are above 40 years of age have already been exposed to HAV. Therefore, vaccination against HAV should be considered,

particularly for young anti-HAV-negative patients with chronic liver disease.

**More information:** Cho HC, Paik SW, Kim YJ, Choi MS, Lee JH, Koh KC, Yoo BC, Son HJ, Kim SW. Seroprevalence of anti-HAV among patients with chronic viral liver disease. *World J Gastroenterol* 2011; 17(2): 236-241. [www.wjgnet.com/1007-9327/full/v17/i2/236.htm](http://www.wjgnet.com/1007-9327/full/v17/i2/236.htm)

Provided by World Journal of Gastroenterology

Citation: Seroprevalence of anti-HAV among patients with chronic viral liver disease (2011, January 25) retrieved 20 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2011-01-seroprevalence-anti-hav-patients-chronic-viral.html>

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