

Prevalence and genotypes of hepatitis C virus in two cohorts of multitransfused patients in Sri Lanka

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Study group consist of 228 thalassaemic patients and 183 patients who undergo long-term haemodialysis. They were randomly recruited between 01 st January 2007 and 30 th April 2007. A sample of blood was collected from all the patients and tested for hepatitis C virus antibody with a third generation ELISA. Repeatedly reactive samples were subjected to RT-PCR for the detection of HCV RNA. Positive isolates were further tested to identify genotypes by nested RT-PCR using primers specific for genotypes 1 to iv results. Prevalence of anti-HCV antibodies among thalassaemic patients and haemodialysis patients were 3.95 percent in 1.09 percent respectively. HCV infection was detected in 45.45 percent of anti-HCV positive patients. There was a significant correlation between the anti-HCV antibody prevalence and the number of blood transfusions or with the number of dialysis cycles. Appositive correlation was observed between past history of surgery and presence of anti-HCV antibodies. Anti HCV positivity was not associated with past history of jaundice. HCV genotypes 11 and non 1-iv were prevalent in these two multitransfused patient cohorts