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Prevalence of Cytomegalovirus in Iraqi Children

Saifan Al Obaidi

Al-Nahrain University School of Medicine, Iraq

Human cytomegalovirus (HCMV) is a leading cause of congenital infections worldwide. It is the most common non-genetic cause of hearing loss and neurodevelopmental delay in children. The majority of children with congenital HCMV are born to cytomegalovirus seropositive women. Many factors enhance the magnitude of HCMV as a health problem such as, no specific antiviral therapy no licensed vaccine, and most maternal and newborn infections are asymptomatic, therefore, not recognized at birth. Surveillance for congenital HCMV infection and disease will be critical for monitoring the effectiveness and impact of vaccination. Due to the lack of reliable data regarding HCMV prevalence in children in our region, this study provide the first national estimate of HCMV seropositivity in Iraqi children under five. Samples from 1000 children were collected by proportional allocation from different geographical areas. Kuppaswami scale was used to measure the socioeconomic status of participants. Serum samples were obtained and the infection was defined as IgM antibody positive by Electrochemiluminescence Immunoassay techniques. The prevalence of HCMV infection was 5.4% among children under five. Positive IgM was associated with low socioeconomic status, maternal bad obstetric history, and lower age of children, Infection was not associated to geography or gender. 15 % of the symptomatic and 0.9 % of the asymptomatic children were IgM positive. 56% of the symptomatic infected children were jaundiced, the predominant clinical presentation. The high prevalence of cytomegalovirus infection in children strongly encourages routine testing for cytomegalovirus IgM among pregnant women in Iraq.

Biography

Saifan has completed her PhD at the age of 42 years from Al-Nahrain University School of Medicine. She is a faculty member at Baghdad University, Medical School. She has published more than 11 papers in reputed journals.

sevan.alwan13@gmail.com

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