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Hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection awareness and knowledge among the general population in Tabuk city (2015)

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Background: Hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection is a major health problem because of its worldwide distribution and potential adverse sequelae. In Saudi Arabia, HBV was the most frequent cause of viral hepatitis.

Aim: To evaluate the knowledge of symptoms and diagnosis of hepatitis B infection, and to determine the awareness of methods of transmission and prevention of Hepatitis B infection among general population in Tabuk.

Method: Cross-sectional study was conducted among 400 participants (192 males and 208 females) of different age groups and different education levels. A questionnaire sheet for the collection of personal information, socioeconomic data, as well as, methods of transmission, symptoms and complication of HBV infection was distributed among students and employees from University of Tabuk and from different high schools as well as from King Khalid Hospital attendants. The study was held from April 29, 2015 to May 10, 2015. Data was then analyzed by using SPSS version (20.0).

Results: More than half (57%) of all participants are aware that HBV is an infectious disease. Transmission through blood is known to 54%, tattoo to 27%, dental procedures to 48%, and sexual transmission to 39%. Jaundice as a major symptom is known to only 52%. About two thirds of all participants recommend screening for HBV before marriage. The female respondents were more oriented about the presence of HBV in Tabuk and the role of liver enzymes in the diagnosis ($p < 0.05$). The overall knowledge about HBV is significantly related to educational attainment ($P < 0.05$).

Conclusion: Our study showed that the degree of HBV awareness and knowledge among the general population in Tabuk city is relatively poor. Health education programs are highly recommended to increase awareness towards its prevention.

Biography

Aeshah S Alamrani recently graduated from Tabuk University School of Medicine.

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