PREVALENCE AND RISK FACTORS FOR HEPATITIS B INFECTION AMONG PREGNANT WOMEN ATTENDING ANTENATAL CLINICS IN GARISSA DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Hepatitis is a general term meaning inflammation of the liver, caused by a variety of different viruses such as Hepatitis A, B, C, D, and E. More than 2 billion people alive today have been infected with HBV at some time in their lives with 350 million of them remaining infected chronically and being carriers of the virus. A cross sectional study was carried out to determine the prevalence and risk factors for Hepatitis B infection among pregnant women attending ANC clinics in Garissa district. The study subjects were selected by systematic random sampling and every fourth client was included in the study after which a blood sample was removed for routine antennal profile. Left over blood samples were subjected to Hepatitis B screening by ELISA method after getting consent from the study subjects. Of the 384 pregnant women included in the study, 54 (14.1%) were sero-positive for Hepatitis B surface antigen. The significant risk factor for hepatitis positivity were female genital mutilation (COR-3.125; CI-95% 1.089-8.96; p=0.0262), blood transfusion history (COR-3.54, CI-95%-1.01-7.79 p=0.000135) and dental procedure history (COR-1.986; 95%CI- 1.11-3.54; p-0.0187). There was no significance difference with respect to presence of tattoo (p= 0.527), positive history of jaundice (p= 0.432), and history of surgical procedure (p= 0.538). Prevalence rate (14.1%) was found to be very high hence putting Garissa within the areas of high endemicity according to WHO criteria. Blood transfusion, history dental procedure and female genital mutilation were found to be associated with hepatitis B infection. Integration of monovalent hepatitis B vaccine into the national immunization and screening of antenatal mother for hepatitis B infection are some of the intervention strategies that need to be adopted in order to reduce the rate of hepatitis B infection