

Hepatitis B vaccination awareness and biological risk

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KEY WORDS

Hepatitis B vaccination; hepatitis B markers; biological risk

SUMMARY

Background: *Hepatitis B virus is a possible risk in persons exposed to biological risk at work. Vaccination is the only prevention against infection. Objectives:* A population of 1,408 employees of the University of Padua was investigated to define the immunological status for HBV and degree of awareness to hepatitis B vaccination. **Methods:** *The subjects were subdivided according to sex, age (≤ 40 or >40 years old), level of education (college graduates or lower), and the extent of biological risk (no risk, low or high risk). Clinical history questionnaires were used and measurement of hepatitis B markers was carried out. Results:* The results showed that only 30.5% of the subjects had been vaccinated; among these, 90.2% showed a measurable level of anti-HBs antibodies, 8.2% showed anti-HBs antibodies lower than 10 IU/L, and 1.6% showed positive markers of previous infection. However, among non-vaccinated subjects 13.4% were positive for previous infection; in all subjects, prevalence of hepatitis B virus infection was 9.8%. The awareness to hepatitis B vaccination was altogether very low (30.5%), but females (44.2%), subjects less than 40 years of age (43.5%), college graduates (34.1%), and high risk exposed personnel (57.7%) were more likely to comply compared to male subjects (odds ratio 2.53), subjects more than 40 years of age (odds ratio 3.57), non-college graduates (odds ratio 1.65), or low risk exposed (odds ratio 13.42). **Conclusions:** *The variables considered appeared to influence awareness to vaccination. Owing to low awareness, an information campaign was started and 90% of the invited subjects were immunized.*

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