

Vaccination against hepatitis B virus in workers of a general hospital in Athens

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KEY WORDS

HBV infection; vaccination; health care workers

SUMMARY

Background: *Protection against hepatitis B virus infection by vaccination is considered to be an important preventive measure for health care workers. Objectives:* Investigation of vaccination coverage against hepatitis B virus in health care workers of a regional general hospital in Athens and assessment of predictive factors possibly associated with the likelihood of vaccination. *Methods:* In a cross-sectional study, a questionnaire survey was carried out on 175 health care workers of a regional general hospital in Athens. The questionnaire included questions concerning socio-demographic factors, HBV vaccination status and reasons for non-vaccination, as well as questions about knowledge of routes of transmission and the complications of HBV infection. Compliance with preventive practices against HBV infection was also assessed. **Results:** Overall vaccination coverage was 57.1%. Logistic regression analysis revealed that occupation and use of gloves were independently associated with the likelihood of vaccination against HBV. Doctors recorded an odds ratio (OR) for vaccination of 4.45 in comparison with nurses/paramedics. Health care workers who wore gloves always/most times demonstrated an odds ratio of 2.79 for vaccination against HBV in comparison with those who never/rarely used them. **Conclusions:** Our study illustrates the characteristics of health care workers with lower prevalence of vaccination against HBV in a representative sample of these workers in a regional general hospital in Athens: nurses/paramedics, those with low level of compliance with use of gloves, and those in non surgical departments. Educational interventions as part of a vaccination programme and continuing education on universal precautions could help increase HBV vaccination coverage among health care workers of the hospital under study.
