

Prevalence of Hepatitis B virus infection among Barbers and their knowledge, attitude and practices in district Sukkur, Sindh

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Introduction: In Pakistan there is no documented evidence for HBV among barbers. We conducted this study in order to determine HBV prevalence among barbers and their knowledge attitude and practices (KAP) in a peri-urban district of Sindh.

Methodology: This cross sectional study was conducted from September-December 2011 in Sukkur and Rohri sub-districts of District Sukkur on a sample of 385 barbers. Information regarding socio-demographic characteristics, knowledge, attitude and practices was collected using structured questionnaire. Blood samples were tested for HBs Ag. Descriptive statistics were used to report Socio-demographic characteristics. Proportions for each item of Knowledge; Attitude and Practices were calculated. A scale was also built to determine the proportions of responses to KAP items.

Results: Prevalence of HBV among barbers was 2.1%. Knowledge of barbers about HBV and its transmission routes was poor. 60% barbers knew about the spread of HBV via contaminated blood (59%), 22.5% barbers reported hand washing between customers, 22% used anti-septic for cleaning instruments and 94% barbers reported frequency of cuts < once a week. Overall response to attitude items was good except that only 35.1% and 33.8% agreed to have vaccination against HBV for themselves and for families respectively. 72.4% used antiseptic for hand washing and 93.7% used new blade on every customer. Overall practices of barbers were poor. Overall performance on knowledge and practice scale was poor compared to scale on which 80% of barbers responded positively.

Conclusion: Prevalence of HBV among barbers was lower compared to available national figures for prevalence among general population showing that barbers are not at higher risk of HBV. Poor knowledge and practices of barbers highlight the need for formulation and implementation of policies ensuring registration of barbers. Emphasis should be placed on adopting safety guidelines to minimize the risk of occupational hazard.

Biography

Imran Naeem Abbasi has completed his residency in Community Medicine at the age of 29 years. Currently he is working as Research Fellow in the Department of Community Health Sciences, Aga Khan University, Karachi Pakistan. He has published 4 papers in indexed/peer reviewed journals and several others are in pipeline.

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