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The epidemiology of HCV transmission as a global health problem

The hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection transmission has changed considerably, reflecting both the evolution of medicine, with the discovery of HCV in 1989, and the health and social changes. Parenteral exposure is the main way of HCV transmission. After 1989, the introduction of antibody screening tests among blood donors has reduced the rate of post-transfusion hepatitis. Currently, in many countries, routine blood donor screening by nucleic acid amplification testing for the presence of HCV-RNA has been introduced. The HCV prevalence in drug users exceeds 80% in some countries. Moreover, the HCV infection is common in the Baby Boomers. As recommended by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, given the high prevalence of HCV infection in these patients, it is conceivable that an anti-HCV screening, with subsequent detection of HCV-RNA in positive anti-HCV subjects, could be offered to people born between the years of 1946 and 1964 to greatly reduce the HCV infection in the world by anti-viral treatment. Moreover, the HCV screening could be offered to people most at risk for HCV infection such as those had blood transfusions, blood products, or organ donations before the 90s, prisoners, health care workers, drug users, infants born to HCV-infected mothers. Furthermore it is necessary to remember the hundreds of thousands of people in the developing world who have very limited access to HCV diagnostics and treatment.

Biography

Cristina Stasi graduated in Medicine and Surgery at the Catholic University of "Sacred Heart" in Rome in the year 2001. In 2006 she specialized in Gastroenterology at the University of Pisa. From 2006 to 2009 she took part in clinical research projects at the "Careggi" University Hospital in Florence. At the same time she improved her knowledge in Study Design, Management of Clinical Research Project, Statistics, Epidemiology. In 2013 she received her PhD in Experimental and Clinical Medicine from the University of Florence. Currently, she is collaborating with the Regional Health Agency of Tuscany and with the Department of Clinical and Experimental Medicine, University of Florence on clinical research projects on chronic hepatitis. In 2017 she obtained the National Scientific Qualification to function as Associate Professor of Gastroenterology in Italian Universities. She has published more than 50 papers in reputed international journals and she is serving as an editorial board member of some peer-reviewed journals.

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