

**Project No : 3454/2006**

**To study the incidence of post-transfusion hepatitis E infection**

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**OBJECTIVES**

Hepatitis E generally known to be faeco-orally transmitted has been shown to have significant transmission by blood borne route. Paucity of data on asymptomatic viremia in blood donors and higher incidence of Hepatitis E in Hemodialysis patients and Thalassemics mandate a prospective study of Blood recipients to elucidate the exact incidence and natural history of post transfusion Hepatitis E.

**METHOD**

2000 recipients of blood or blood products transfusion were followed up for 2 months to detect development of Post transfusion Hepatitis E by clinical examination. Transaminases and IgM anti HEV. HEV RNA was done in patients with elevated levels of transaminases.

**RESULTS**

Out of 2000 patients, 5 (0.25%) were positive for IgM Anti HEV at the time of transfusion and were excluded from the study. Rest of 1995 patients were followed up for 2 months post transfusion. A total of 1303 (65.3%) patients were followed up for two months and 1636 (82.0%) patients at least once in two visits, out of 1995 patients recruited for the study. None of the followed up patients reported development of jaundice or had clinically evident hepatitis, although 62 patients had raised transaminases detected at either one or on both the visits. All followed up patients were tested IgM anti HEV at both the visits and none were found to be positive. Patients with raised transaminases (62) were subjected to HEV RNA and all were found to be negative.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

In this study, a total of 2000 recipients of blood or blood products were prospectively studied for incidence of transfusion associated hepatitis E over a period of 60 days. No transfusion associated hepatitis E was detected among any of the transfusion recipients. In view of these observations screening of donors for evidence hepatitis E is not likely to affect transfusion associated hepatitis E. Hence routine screening of donors for hepatitis E is not recommended.