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Anti-Hev Antibody Prevalence in Three Distinct Regions of Turkey and its Relationship with Age, Gender, Education and Abortions

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Abstract: Hepatitis E virus (HEV) causes epidemics in developing countries such as India, Burma, Indonesia, Chad and China, but it causes sporadic cases in developed countries such as the U.S.A., Canada and the U.K. Turkey represents a bridge between HEV endemic and non-endemic areas, and HEV may cause epidemics in Turkey. In this study, the prevalence of HEV in three distinct regions of Turkey and its relationship with age, gender, education and abortions was investigated. Nine hundred ten randomly selected cases from three cities in three geographic regions of Turkey (Manisa from the Aegean region, Elmadağ/Ankara from Central Anatolia and Diyarbakır from Southeastern Anatolia) were enrolled in the study. After informed consent was obtained, the subjects completed a detailed questionnaire including questions about age, sex, education, and the number of pregnancies, abortions, stillbirths and live babies, and if there was a history of abortion from icteric pregnancy. We researched anti-HEV antibodies in the serum samples of subjects using ELISA. The overall anti-HEV antibody seroprevalence rate was 6.3% (57/910). It was 2.7% in Elmadağ/Ankara, 3.8% in Manisa and 11.7% in Diyarbakır. There was a significant difference between Diyarbakır and the other two regions ($p < 0.0001$). No significant difference was observed between the other parameters. In conclusion, the overall anti-HEV antibody seroprevalence rate was 6.3% and these rates increased with age.

Key Words: Anti-HEV antibody, epidemiology, age, gender, education and abortion

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