Hepatitis B and HIV Coinfection Is Very Common Worldwide

Researchers analyzed more than 350 studies to estimate the prevalence of hepatitis B among people with HIV around the world.

January 15, 2020 By Benjamin Ryan

Among people living with HIV globally, coinfection with hepatitis B virus (HBV) is concerningly high, Healio reports. However, prevalence of HBV in the HIV population varies by region, a nation's level of development and local prevalence of HIV.

Steve Leumi, MSc, of the University of Yaoundé's Biotechnology Centre in Cameroon, and colleagues conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis of 358 studies including 834,544 people from 87 nations. They published their findings in Clinical Infectious Diseases.

Overall, 8.4% of the HIV population analyzed had HBV coinfection—an estimated 3,136,500 people. A total of 73.8% of these estimated cases were in sub-Saharan Africa, and 17.1% were in Asia and the Pacific.

Hep B prevalence among people with HIV was 12.4% in West and Central Africa, 9.9% in the Middle East and North Africa, 9.8% in Asia and the Pacific, 7.4% in Eastern and Southern Africa, 6% in Western and Central Europe and North America and 5.1% in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In developing nations, HBV prevalence among HIV-positive individuals was 10.4%, a figure that was progressively lower in nations with higher levels of development, down to 7.3% in highly developed nations. HBV prevalence among people with HIV was 7.3% in nations in which no more than 1% of the general population had HIV and 9.7% in countries with an overall HIV prevalence greater than 1%.

"This study suggests a high burden of HBV infection and infectivity in PLWH [people living with HIV], with disparities according to regions, level of development and country HIV prevalence," the study authors concluded. "To curb the global burden of HBV infection, innovative and community-based strategies are needed [for] PLWH, including education, vaccines, HBV testing and initiation of appropriate treatment like [antiretroviral therapy] containing [tenofovir]. Specific strategies are needed in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia and the Pacific regions, especially in developing countries and countries with high HIV prevalence."

To read the Healio article, click here.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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