**Evaluation of Preoperative Viral Screening in a sample of Iraqi patients at Alkarama**

**Teaching Hospital**

**Raid D. Hashim**

**AlRaheed University College, Department of Dentistry**

**Abstract**

During preparation for elective operations, national guidelines in many countries recommend testing forhuman immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis Bvirus (HBV), and hepatitis C virus (HCV) to decreasethe risk of transmission of the virus through a needlestick or cutting injury. The number of new andunknown diagnoses of viral infections that can bediagnosed by routine screening has not yet beenevaluated.

**Objectives**

To find out the prevalence of unaware hepatitis B and C amongst patients screened for HBV and HCV as a part of preoperative screening at Alkarama Teaching Hospital.

**Methods**

This retrospective study was performed at Alkarama teaching hospital. Over 31 months (between January 2013 and July 2015), the results of preoperative viral screening for hepatitis B and were reviewed. This study includes the results of 14003 patients screened for both Hbs Ag and IgM anti-HCV Ab. These tests were initially measured using ELISA technique; positive results were confirmed twice, the first at the same virology unit in the hospital using ELFA technique, and the second was performed at the central public health laboratory by western blot technique. The percentage of positive results were calculated and compared with similar results obtained from comparable studies in Iraq and other countries.

**Results**

Of the total 14003 screened patients, only 59 patients (0.4%) had confirmed HBV infection. Surprisingly, this number was distributed evenly over the duration of the study. Similarly, only 40 patients (0.2%) of the total 14003 screened patients were confirmed to have HCV infection with a significantly higher number of positive cases in the first months of the study. In general, the total number of patients with either HBV or HCV infection was 99; this number represented 0.7% of the screened patients.

**Conclusion**

The current study suggests a low prevalence of both HBs Ag and anti HCV Ab amongst the studied group. Unexpectedly, the prevalence of HBs Ag was higher than HCV Ab in the studied group.

**Keywords:**

preoperative viral screening, HBV, HCV, ELFA, technique, western blot technique.